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"WANDERING WILLIE," BY ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR WRITERS, HAS JUST BEGUN.

FRANK LESLIE'S

BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY.

An Illustrated Journal of Amusement, Adventure, and Instruction.

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ORVILLE AND DAN; Or, ADVENTURES IN JAPAN.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK.

"THE BOAT RODE ON THE CREST OF A WAVE, SLEWED BROADSIDE ROUND, AND TURNED OVER." . . . "INSTEAD OF PLACING THE SOUP-TUREEN FAIRLY ON THE TABLE, HE PRETENDED TO STUMBLE, AND SHOT THE HOT LIQUID ON THE CAPTAIN'S LEGS." . . . "THIS SPEECH GREATLY INCENSED CHEESMAN, WHO ROLLED OVER AND OVER AND OVER ON THE BEACH WHILETHE BOYS WALKED UP THE RIDGE OF SAND."

CHAPTER I.

A UNITED FAMILY.

"WHAT'S the matter, Dan?" inquired Orville Fillamore of his twin brother as the latter paused in his occupation of turning a wooden chopping-bowl. "Are your eyes troubling you again?"

"Yes," nodded Daniel; "I can scarcely see anything. I guess I'd better quit work and get mother to give me some lotion."

When the boy had left the shop his brother looked over toward the foreman and remarked: "I'm terribly worried about Dan. Father has always expected to have us learn his trade, and will feel bad if we cannot do so."

As he concluded his speech the steam-whistle of the factory announced the hour of noon, hearing which the turners dropped their tools and vanished, and presently a good-looking, blue-eyed girl entered the place through a private door, and glancing toward her brother, said:

"Dinner won't be ready for a while, so I thought I would bring my knitting in and have a little chat

with you;" adding, as she advanced, "Where's Daniel?"

"He's troubled with his eyes again," said Orville. "I think we'd better make him take some advice; don't you, Nellie?"

His sister seated herself near him, and proceeding with her work, said:

"Rose and I were talking about it last night. You know what Doctor Harris told us when Dan was sick before—that he would have to go upon a sea voyage."

"Yes," quietly replied Orville, who was cleaning up his lathe, "I know he did. But how is it to be accomplished? Father can't afford to expend any money upon us."

"What do you mean by us?" she quickly inquired. "We cannot part with both of you. Rose and I will give what we have saved toward paying for brother's trip."

"Nell," exclaimed Orville, rising and regarding her almost angrily, "do you for a moment imagine I would let Dan go by himself? No; we were born together, have never been separated, and never mean to be, if I can help it; besides, neither of us could take your hard-earned money. If you were boys, it would be different."

"Well, what are you two squabbling about?" asked Rose, a handsome brunette, who had, unobserved by them, approached. "I thought I should find you here. Dinner's ready."

"Nell and I never quarrel," laughingly retorted her brother, ceasing his work on the lathe. "The only thing we can't quite agree about is, she thinks women have as much right to help men as the latter have to aid the *softer* sex."

The words had scarcely passed his lips ere his sisters were merrily chasing him round the workshop, and he finally was obliged to kneel on a pile of shavings and beg pardon for what he had said, after which the three quitted the place, and with their arms interlocked, proceeded toward the house.

Mr. Fillamore was a maker of woodenware and the owner of a good-sized factory, but hard times and the expense of bringing up four children had kept him comparatively poor; notwithstanding which, he was respected by every one in the place, while his wife, a comely matron of forty, was as greatly liked as her husband, and their sons and daughters were as popular as the parents.

Nellie, the eldest of the family, kept her father's books, and in her leisure hours earned something by knitting fancy-work. Rose, the other daughter, assisted her mother in the household duties, and was an expert at lace-making, and the twin sons, who had but lately graduated at the high-school, were learning the business of wood-turning. From their infancy these young people had shared each other's joys and sorrows; the girls fairly idolized their dark-eyed brothers, and the latter thinking their sisters were next about perfect. It will therefore be understood that the mere idea of separation was almost more than they could bear to think of.

"Dinner's been waiting some five minutes," remarked their mother, as the three entered the house. "Come, sit down before the food gets cold."

"Where's father?" asked Orville, as they seated themselves at the table.

"Gone to Doctor Harris's with Dan," said Mrs. Fillamore. "When he found how bad the boy's eyes were he insisted upon taking him at once."

"I'm glad he has done so," observed Nellie, "for now we shall know the worst." Then, pausing a moment, added, "Here they are."

"Well," inquired the mother, as Mr. Fillamore and his son came into the room, "what does the doctor say?"

"This," sadly answered the husband, taking his place at the head of the table, "if we want Dan to retain his eyesight he must go on a voyage of some months' duration, as all there is for it."

At this announcement Mrs. Fillamore and her daughters looked very grave, and there was little conversation until the meal was over, when the father said:

"You, Orville, and you, my girls, know the heavy expenses I have to bear. Now I want you to help me in sending Dan this trip."

"Of course we will, papa," said Nellie. "Rose and I will pay for him, and you, Orville, must be reasonable and let Dan go alone."

"I was waiting for that," cried her brother. "It's all very well for you to talk about paying for Dan, but I've got a better plan. I'll ship as a sailor, and give the captain my wages if he'll take him as a cabin passenger."

"That'll never work," said Rose. "Don't you remember Captain Jenkins told us it would cost at least forty dollars a month to send brother anything like a trip? they wouldn't give you as much for wages."

"Perhaps not," he answered. "Anyhow, I mean to accompany Dan, and the expenses ain't coming out of your pockets. We should be ashamed to take your savings."

"Yes," said Daniel; "if I go it must not be at such a sacrifice. My eyes are not so bad but that I can earn something toward paying part of my passage, and Orville will do the rest."

"One moment, my son," interposed their father; "I cannot spare both you boys. It will be bad enough to lose one of you."

"Yes," sobbed Mrs. Fillamore. "Goodness knows it will be sufficiently hard for me to part with Dan—if both of you go, my heart will break."

"That settles it, dear mother," quietly remarked the afflicted lad. "I would rather be blind all my life than give you sorrow."

"No, no," she said. "You've got to go, my boy. I sha'n't be the only mother with a son at sea."

"Listen to me," cried Orville, impetuously, rising and glancing round him, as though addressing a meeting; it's decided that Dan is to go, isn't it? and we all know that his trip will cost money. Now, I've got a proposition; let me call on Uncle Bowers and put the case to him. He is an old sailor, and I've no doubt I can talk him into loaning us any amount we require. As to letting Dan make this voyage alone, how can you think of such a thing? If he were strong, like I am, it wouldn't so much matter, but until he is, he needs me to take care of him. You, father and mother, will feel a deal happier, and you girls won't fret your hearts out if I am near him all the time. It's hard to have to break up such a united family as ours; however, it would be harder to have brother entirely lose his sight."

An animated discussion followed this speech, and it was finally decided that Orville should try what he could do with his uncle, Captain Bowers, though neither Mr. nor Mrs. Fillamore thought he would succeed with the mean old man.

The next morning the boy dressed himself in his best suit, and after putting the horse in the buggy, was driving through the yard when he saw his eldest sister waiting in the porch.

"Can I take you anywhere, Nell?" he inquired.

"Yes," she nodded, "you can take me with you. I know how to talk to uncle, and you don't."

CHAPTER II.

HOW THEIR UNCLE HELPED THEM.

"WHAT do you say?" snapped Captain Orville Bowers, when his housekeeper informed him that his nephew and niece were seated in the parlor. "What on earth do they want?"

"They didn't tell me," coolly answered the woman. "Put on a decent-looking suit and come down and see them. You ought to be proud of having such relations."

"Proud!" he growled, as she descended the stairs. "I'd like to know why they come here just as I am busy over my accounts?" Adding, as he closed and locked his desk, "Well, I suppose I must see them; but they won't get anything out of me."

When he had pocketed his keys he proceeded to a massive wardrobe, and taking out a suit of navy-blue clothes, placed them carefully on the bed, then dipped his head in a bowl of water, dried his hair with a coarse towel, and after raking his locks smooth with a horn-comb, dressed and went below.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, upon beholding his visitors. "Why, how do you do, children? Didn't observe you at first, you've grown so tall. Come to stay all day?"

"No, uncle," laughingly replied Nellie. "Orville wants to consult you about something, so I thought I'd accompany him."

"Well, Orvy," he said, seating himself in a big armchair and taking a bite of tobacco, "what can I do for you, my boy. Nothing affords me so much pleasure as to give advice to young folks."

The lad stated his errand and spoke so straightforwardly that Nellie saw, unless she interfered, there was little hope of their uncle helping them; however, she waited her chance and let him run on, while the captain listened most attentively, nodded approvingly, and, as Orville thought, agreed to everything; but, presently, when his nephew had finished, the old man drawled:

"Orvy, them who goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing."

"Not when they come to you, uncle," naively observed the girl. "Brother don't mean that he wants you to actually put out the money—what he desires is this: You know a great many captains of ships; now we want one who is a good, kind man, to take Dan as a passenger, and let Orville's wages go toward paying for his brother's board and lodging, and if that isn't enough, for you to be responsible for the balance, which we girls promise to pay you."

"That ain't what Orville *said*," coldly responded her relative.

"Or what I meant," stoutly answered the boy. "Dan's eyesight will soon improve, and he will be able to work as well as I."

"Now, brother, you leave this matter to me," pleaded Nellie. "Uncle and I will fix it, if you 'll only keep quiet;" with which she turned to the captain and continued: "If you 'll help us, Rose and I will make up your new shirts."

"It's taking an awful responsibility on my shoulders, I'm nervously remarked. "S'pose Orvy turns out to be a drunkard?"

"What?" cried the boy. "You know very well father has brought us up differently from that."

"Hush!" whispered his sister, telegraphing him to be quiet; "uncle isn't accusing you; he is merely saying what might be."

"Jes so," chuckled the captain; "you forget how many years I spent at sea. Why, I've known boys as well brought up as you to turn out regular ring-tailed roarers when they fairly got afloat, so it makes me cautious. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'm acquainted with a real nice man, who used to be my mate, and is now employed in the whaling business; not catching whales, but fetching the ile from various rendezvous. He's in port now and I'll write to him."

"Thank you, uncle," said Nellie. "You understand this, whatever expense you may be at in the matter, Rose and I will pay. We'll not occupy any more of your valuable time, so will say good-morning."

"Then you won't remain to dinner?" inquired their relative. "Guess we can find something for you to eat, if you will. Don't stay unless you want to."

Spite of this *pressing* invitation, the brother and sister determined to return home, and in a few minutes were on their way, Orville's first remark being:

"Why didn't you let me try and borrow the money of him, Nell?"

"You did try, you silly fellow," she laughingly answered. "I knew very well how much he'd lend. He contented if he gets you a place on board ship, and Dan taken as a passenger at a reasonable rate; you can't make uncle any different from what he is, and we must be satisfied."

When they arrived home the girl informed her family of what she had done, and about a week afterward received the following letter:

"NIECE NELLIE FILLAMORE—I have received a reply from my friend, Captain Ezekiah Cheeseman, who says he will give your brother Daniel an easy berth in the cabin and take Orville as a green hand, without any payment on either side, and will treat both boys just as he would his own sons. He also promises if either of them gets sick to give them the best of nursing and doctors; in fact, will do everything to make their cruise a pleasant one. Knowing the captain to be a kind, honest man, I can strongly recommend him to your brothers. If they accept his offer they will require two suits of cloth clothes, three of duck, flannel underclothing, heavy and light; two pairs of sea-boots and other things that will not cost more than a hundred dollars each, and as these are best obtained in a seaport, I would advise you to delay buying them until you take the boys on, which you can do as soon as you like. I inclose the captain's address, and with my prayers and good wishes for my nephews' success in their undertaking, remain your affectionate uncle,

"ORVILLE BOWERS."

"I don't see that he has done much for us," said Rose.

"No," grumbled Orville; "if that's his best, what's his worst like? Say, father, are you willing that we should take this offer?"

"I'll tell you what we'll do," replied their parent. "We will go and see the captain, and if you like him and he likes you, all will be well."

This was done, and everything proving to be satisfactory, the boys were shipped and set to work at once, Dan being employed as assistant steward, and Orville as a sailor, Captain Cheeseman kindly offering them a home until the vessel was ready to start, and Mr. Fillamore promising to return with their mother and sisters to see them off.

Nothing could have been more fatherly than the treatment of the captain, who advised them about their outfit and helped them in selecting it, and they voted him a first-class man.

On a bright morning in September their ship received its last package of cargo, the crew came on board, and the brothers learned that the destination of the vessel was the coast of Japan.

"You've got nice positions, my sons," observed their father, as the family assembled to say good-by in the cabin. "You'll see many countries, and I hope to welcome you back within a year. One thing comforts me, you 'll have a good friend in Captain Cheeseman."

"Yes," said the latter, who was standing by, "it all depends on themselves, now. I will do anything in my power to promote their interest."

We will not attempt to describe the leave-taking, which was a sorrowful one, the last thing Nellie did being to give Orville a small package containing a chamois-leather belt, in which was sewn a sum of money, while Rose presented a similar one to Dan.

Five minutes afterward the *Ocean Belle* was clear of the dock, and the boys saw their father and mother, Nellie and Rose standing among the crowd assembled on the pier-head.

"Good-by, good-by!" shouted Mr. Fillamore. "Orville, take care of Dan."

"Good-by, good-by!" chorused the boys, Orv adding: "Don't have any fear about us, father. We're going to have a real good time."

CHAPTER III.

THE CAPTAIN LETS HIS HAIR GROW.

AS soon as the *Ocean Belle* had dismissed her pilot, Cheeseman dropped his kindly manner and shouted to the lads:

"Now, then, Dan, if you're wanted below in the cabin, and you, Orv, go forward and help the men make sail."

The brothers exchanged glances of surprise, then proceeded to do as they were directed, and presently both had their hands full.

"Go aloft and help loosen the mainsail," bawled the mate to Orville. "What are you gaping at?"

"I don't know which sail you mean," was the boy's response.

The officer pointed it out, and the lad clambered up to the yard, and under the direction of one of the men, began to untie the reef-points, after which they cast off the topsail and returned to the deck.

Although Orville was totally unacquainted with a sailor's duty, he was quick and smart, and showed little of the hesitation common to a green hand, thus from the commencement becoming a favorite with the crew.

When the vessel was well out to sea the starboard watch went to dinner, and the boy found he was expected to act as a sort of waiter, fetch the food from the galley, wash up the plates and messkids, and perform all the offices of a subordinate, many of these being of anything but a pleasant description. However, as he did it on account of his brother, he put up with the discomfort.

"I'll just keep this all to myself," he thought, as he swabbed out the forecastle. "Dan's got a good, easy berth aft, and as long as I am in the ship with him I don't care. I won't let him know if my work ain't quite what I expected."

About an hour after, Orville was lying on the top of a chest, feeling as sick as a cat, and his brother, who was even worse affected than himself, was similarly occupied ashaft.

"Where's that green hand?" shouted the captain from the poop. "Tell him to come here and help heave the log."

"Here, you boy Orville," bellowed the mate, "turn out of that fo'castle; the old man wants you."

"All right!" responded the poor fellow, rising and grasping a stanchion, for the ship was beginning to pitch and toss in a very lively manner. "My gracious! how my head swims!"

"Oh, you'll soon get over that," cheerfully remarked the man. "Hurry up; the captain ain't in the best of tempers."

It was some time ere the lad succeeded in reaching the poop, and when he did Cheeseman saluted him as follows:

"See here, Fillamore, you and I might just as well understand each other right away. I am willing to indulge your brother because he ain't as strong as you are, though I don't mean to put up with any thunderation nonsense from you. Now, take a good drink of sea-water, and keep moving about the decks until you are all right."

The green hand listened in a very dazed manner, then staggered forward and followed the captain's advice, and before nightfall had got over the worst of his trouble, it being certain that the more a person gives in to sea-sickness the worse he becomes.

At eight bells—eight P. M.—the mate told him he could turn in until the next morning, but before the lad proceeded to do so he thought he would pay a visit to his brother, with which intent he descended the cabin-stairs, and holding on to the companionrails, called:

"Dan, where are you?"

Not receiving a response, Orville groped his way until he came to the stateroom, the door of which was open, when he once more repeated his question.

"Eh?" sleepily muttered some one who was lying in the berth.—"What do you want?"

The motion of the ship and the closeness of the place made the boy exceedingly dizzy, and prevented him from recognizing the voice of the speaker; so grasping the door-posts with his hands, he balanced himself, and answered:

"How do you feel, old man?"

"What do you say?" muttered the occupant of the bunk, half rising and seizing a pair of heavy boots, which he launched at his visitor's head. "Get out of this!"

The amazed intruder hung on for a moment, and as the vessel pitched to leeward went with it, and struck the infuriated speaker with his head, literally doubling him up and knocking the breath out of his body.

The ship rocked backward and forward, and prevented Orville from regaining his feet; meanwhile his speechless victim contrived to grab him by the hair, and to administer several severe punches in the vicinity of the boy's ribs.

"Come, stow it, Dan," he said, suddenly freeing himself. "I was afraid you were seasick."

"I'll seasick you," gasped Cheeseman, as he emerged from the bunk. "You confounded young idiot, what do you mean by disturbing me?"

As he said this he again seized the boy and shook him until his teeth rattled, having done which, he threw him into the cabin and roared:

"Steward, kick this fellow on deck!"

Orville did not wait for the command to be carried out, but crawled up the companion and made the best of his way to the forecastle, where, in the innocence of his heart, he related his experience to the watch below, who were just then turning in.

"He'll kill you, boy," said one of the men. "I would'n't be in your shoes for a thousand dollars."

"He shot three green hands last voyage," mumbled an old sailor named Johnnie Dawes. "I tell you, the captain is letting his hair grow this trip."

"What do you mean?" asked the lad. "So long as I do my best he can't hurt me. What's his hair got to do with me?"

"Always in the fo'castle," growled one of the watch who had already retired. "If some of you gentlemen of property can sleep all night, I can't."

At four o'clock the next morning Orville was roused out and sent aft to scrub gratings, and while he was thus employed noticed his brother emerge from the cabin with a coffee-pot, whereupon he dropped his work, and advancing to him, said:

"How do you feel?"

Had it been quite daylight he would have seen that Dan's lips were blue, his face pale and his limbs trembling. As it was, he merely heard him say:

"Oh, I am first-rate, Orv. I want to tell you one thing—it's against the rules of the ship for you to come down into the cabin to see me, so please don't do it again. The steward says we shall have plenty of time to talk together on Sunday afternoons."

"Are you comfortable?" whispered Orville.

"Yes," answered his brother. "I mustn't stop now, because I've got to get the captain his coffee."

"Here, you, boy Fillamore," cried the mate of the watch; "where are you skulking? I thought I told you to scrub those gratings?"

The lads separated, and in another instant Orville was washing away like a good fellow.

Dan's berth was not a more pleasant one than his brother's, spite of which he made the best of it, thinking, perhaps, after all, everything would come out all right; still, for the life of him, he could not understand how his eyesight would be benefited by being cooped up in the narrow, badly-lighted and ever-a-ventilated dog-hole termed the steward's pantry.

When the deck had been nicely dried down the captain made his appearance, and, addressing himself to Orville, said:

"See here, young fellow, I want to give you a little advice. Don't imagine because I know your uncle that you can do just as you like aboard my ship. Your duty is to stay on deck and obey orders, and your brother's is to remain below. The next time you come mooching about after him I shan't let you off as easy as I did the last night. None of your back talk, now; I won't hear a word from you. When I'm at sea I let my hair grow, so just mind your eye."

For a moment the lad felt inclined to retort. However, remembering if he did so it would be all the worse for Dan, wisely returned to his work.

He felt bitter against his uncle, and resolved when he wrote home to fully expose Captain Cheeseman's real character.

CHAPTER IV.

A TRYING TIME.

IT was several days ere the brothers had an opportunity for a chat. Meanwhile they had fully learned what the captain meant by letting his hair grow.

"How do you like the skipper?" whispered Orville to Dan as they leaned on the forecastle rail. "Is he kind to you?"

"No, he is not," was the reply. "I have tried to bear the without complaining, but can't stand it any longer. I am going in the cabin another week I shall be as blind as a mole."

"Have you said anything to him about it?" asked Orville.

"Yes," murmured Dan. "I told him how I felt, and he said he didn't care a cent, and if I complained again he'd rope's-end me."

"He did, did he?" cried the other, springing up, and motioning as though to go aft. "I'll talk to him about that."

"Stop," said Dan; "you will only get yourself into trouble. Yesterday I heard him say if you ever opened your lips to him he'd serve you as he does some of the crew. Don't you remember what Nell used to tell you? There's nothing gained by attacking any one stronger than yourself."

"Cheeseman's a brute, anyhow," warmly answered his brother. "Up to this time I've kept quiet, believing he treated you well, but now I feel like standing up for our rights."

"Our rights!" said Dan, with a smile. "Do you know what they are? Nine consist in getting up at four o'clock in the morning, scrubbing out the cabin, cleaning up the staterooms, laying the table, fetching the meals from the galley, having plates and dishes thrown at my head, and working without cessation until eight at night. Now tell me yours."

"Well, mine ain't quite so bad as that," said Orville. "True, the captain indulges in some very tall talk, and he does kept his hands off me, though it's not very pleasant to see him and his mates knock down the crew and carry on as they do. It seems to me when one's sailors get aboard ship they are regular slaves. Surely if I were to speak to him civilly he would send you to work on deck."

"Not he," sighed Dan. "I wonder what father, mother and the girls would think if they knew how we are treated?"

"I'm glad they don't," said Orville. "When we get to Cape of Good Hope we'll write and tell them that we dislike the ship, and may possibly leave her." Then, after musing a while, he added: "I'll tell you a way to get sent on deck. Sit upon the captain when he has down on the lounge, spit soap upon the face and keep his awful clumsy. His treatment justifies you in resorting to stratagem."

That evening when Dan was waiting at the skipper table, Cheeseman not only made use of bad language to him, but cruelly threw a cup of hot tea in his face, which so exasperated the boy that he determined to carry out Orville's hint, and the next day, instead of placing the soup-tureen fairly on the table, pretended to stumble, and shot the hot liquid upon the cloth, scalding the captain's legs and causing the mates to rise and dance a sort of hornpipe.

"Get out of this, you stupid lubber," roared the skipper. "Go forward, and never show your nose here again."

As may be imagined, Dan readily obeyed the order, and that afternoon was put in the port watch, while his brother was placed in the starboard.

"It was the only thing to do," laughingly remarked Orville, when Dan told him how he had acted. It's all very well for you to feel sorry. He didn't hesitate to scald you with the tea, did he?"

"No," was the response. "Still, two wrongs don't make a right."

About six weeks after this they arrived in Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, where they spent a week in refitting, though none of the crew were allowed to go on shore, nor were boats permitted alongside the ship.

On the day of sailing the captain surlily informed the men that if they had any letters he would mail them, bearing which the boys handed him those they had written to their family.

One afternoon after they had sailed Orville was cleaning the cabin skylights, when, in moving Cheeseman's coat, a paper dropped from the pocket, and the boy recognized that it was a letter he had addressed to his father, and picking it up, advanced to the skipper, saying:

"How came this in your pocket, captain, and where is the envelope?"

Instead of replying the bully snatched the paper and tossed it overboard, then, turning to him, said:

"Go on with your work. I don't allow people to write lies about me, and if you ever dare to do it again I'll make you wish you had never learnt how to handle a pen."

The boy saw it was useless to bring trouble upon himself, so bravely held his tongue; however, during their long passage to their next stopping-place, Hong Kong, the brothers determined to quit the ship at the first opportunity, and spite of the captain's vigilance, contrived to mail the following letter:

"Ship *Ocean Belle*, }
"Hong Kong, April—, 18—. }

"DEAR PARENTS—In the first place we are both of us well and hearty, and Dan has quite recovered his eyesight. In the second, we are not satisfied with the captain, and cannot understand how uncle could have recommended us to him. I think it is scarcely necessary for us to say we have tried our very best to do our duty, notwithstanding which Cheeseman has treated us in such a manner that we will not remain with him a day longer than we are compelled. Do not think from this we are in any way changed, or that he has hammered us as he has done some of the crew; it will be to avoid this we shall leave him. We sail from here to-morrow and proceed to the coast of Japan, and if he allows us to land anywhere shall not return to the ship. We want you to see Uncle Bowers, and to tell him what we think of his good, kind-hearted friend. Both Dan and I regret having to write you thus, and I hope that you won't worry if Captain Cheeseman sends home to say we have left him. Tell sister Nell we think of her all the time, and that Orville has tried to follow her advice, and tell Rose we speak about her every day, and that Dan is so rugged and bronzed she would not know him. We wear the belts they gave us in parting, and the money will be useful to pay our passage home. We intend to ship on aboard some whaler, the captain of which has the reputation of being a gentleman, so father, mother and sisters, don't worry, or think harm has befallen us if letters do not reach you for a long time. Remember, we two are together, and if Dan feels dull I cheer him up, and if Orville is inclined to be headstrong Dan is with him to give him good counsel. With the exception of uncle, we don't wish you to mention what we have written to any of our friends or neighbors, but give them our kind remembrance. We hope, before we see you again, to know something of foreign countries, and with love to all of you, remain, yours affectionately,

"DANIEL and ORVILLE FILLAMORE."

This letter went westward while its senders started for the Far East, and in due time arrived off the island of Yezo, where they found a fleet of whaleships awaiting them.

Several weeks were expended in transferring stores to the whalers and taking aboard oil in exchange, but the lads found no opportunity of going ashore, or in any way bettering their condition.

Captain Cheeseman had literally and figuratively let his hair grow, and when in a rage looked more like a wild beast than a human being. Men were knocked down with handspikes, triced up in the rigging by their thumbs and otherwise evilly treated, and the crew were almost driven to mutiny. However, up to that time he had kept his hands off the boys.

CHAPTER V.

PARTING COMPANY WITH CHEESEMAN.

ONE Sunday morning in June Captain Cheeseman was pacing the poop of the *Ocean Belle*, venting his spleen upon some everybody with whom he came in contact, his departure southward being delayed by the non-arrival of one of the whalers at the rendezvous.

"This is a nice way to serve me," he snarled. "The company ordered all the ships to be in this latitude and longitude in May, and now it's the third of June and the *Flying Cloud* has not put in her appearance."

"Why don't you land her stuff at Little Rishiri?" remarked the chief mate, referring to a small island off the coast of Yezo. "We got all the oil we can carry, and the ship is sure to go there to clean her copper. Perhaps she got caught in the ice and had to winter up north."

Like most ill-tempered people, Cheeseman professed to treat advice with scorn, and answered the mate in a very contemptuous manner.

However, within an hour sail was made upon the ship, and she stood toward the spot already mentioned, anchoring off it about six o'clock that evening.

The next day all hands were employed in landing stores, which were placed in a warehouse belonging to the whaling company, who paid the Japanese Government rent for the island.

When the last package had been transferred, Cheeseman bade the boys man the gig, and they were presently rowing him toward the landing-place.

Though both of them could handle an oar, they were unaccustomed to the surf, and on nearing the latter got furled; noticing which the captain abused them most savagely, making matters worse and causing Dan to catch a crab.

In another instant the boat rose on the crest of a wave, slewed broadside round, turned over and was thrown bodily on to the beach, where they struggled to their feet, and the captain, foaming with rage, picked up an oar and aimed a blow at Dan's head, but luckily missed it.

"Here, stop that!" shouted Orville, rushing toward his brother's assailant. "Don't you hit him."

The infuriated man disregarded this caution, and attacking the lads indiscriminately, did his best to kill them; finding which they defended themselves, and after a severe struggle overcame the bully and bound him hand and foot.

He looked a perfect fiend as he lay there with his long hair and beard full of sand. However, the boys were not afraid, and let him say what he pleased, his threats being terrible to listen to.

They waited until he had exhausted himself, then Orville said:

"It's no good your carrying on like that, captain. The ship is too far away for the mates to hear you. We've heard sufficient of your talk; now you must listen to us. You promised father that you would do everything to promote our interest and would be as good as a parent to us. We don't consider that you have kept your word, and mean to leave you."

"You do, do you?" snarled the skipper, making a tremendous effort and contriving to sit upright. "This is a desolate island, and there's no way of getting off it. Are you aware you have been guilty of mutiny, and that I can shoot you and not be punished for it?"

"Don't talk such nonsense," gravely answered Dan; "we are going to leave you, anyhow. As to our not being able to quit this island, where there's a will there's a way. We are free-born Americans, and we are not used to being treated like slaves."

"Yes," nodded Orville, "you may be a very good navigator, but we have come to the conclusion that you are no gentleman, and don't mean to give you a chance to carry out your threats against us. We can't waste any more time talking this over, so good-by. We've had enough of you."

This speech greatly incensed Cheeseman, who rolled over and over on the beach and frothed at the mouth, like a rabid animal, while the boys walked up the ridge of sand that surrounded the island and vanished from his sight.

In vain he called to them to come back and promised not to punish them; he only addressed the empty air, and his voice was lost in the roaring of the surf.

"I wonder what's become of the old man?" remarked the mate, as he leveled his spyglass at the shore. "I can't make out either him, the boys or the boat. I've a good mind to send and see if he's met with an accident."

"And get sworn at for your pains?" answered the second mate. "He's all right enough."

"I don't know," murmured the first speaker, once more using his glass. "Guess I'll go ashore. I can't see the edge of the beach from here; there's a good deal of surf on."

Slinging his telescope over his shoulder, he ascended to the mizzen cross-trees, and after making a careful examination of the shore, shouted to his brother-officer:

"I can make out some one lying there, but cannot see the gig. Man the first whaleboat and I'll go ashore."

"I hope the boys ain't drowned," said the sailors, as they prepared to obey the order. "Dan and Orville are two good fellows; "if anybody's gone we hope it's the old man."

Two minutes afterward they were seated in the boat, and the mate, grasping the steering-oar, bade them give way all they knew.

"My gracious!" he cried, as they neared the beach, "there's the gig stove in! Run her up, boys."

The boat rose on the crest of the surf and balanced for a moment, then shot forward on to the sand, landing within ten yards of where the captain was lying.

"So you've come at last," he snarled, as the men gathered round him and the mate proceeded to untie his bonds. "Were you blind that you couldn't see those fellows attack me?"

"There are no natives on this island, are there?" asked the officer.

"Perhaps he hanged," savagely retorted the skipper, rising and shaking himself. "It was those mutinous dogs of boys. Go back to the ship and fetch my pistols and bring your own. I'll make them smart for what they have done. They can't get off this island, anyhow."

While the mate was obeying his order the captain walked up to the store-house and inspected the packages that had been landed, after doing which he locked the door, pocketed the key and awaited the return of his men. Accordingly he be instantly obeyed, and having hereto looked upon the boys as mere slaves who were bound to submit to his treatment, it was no wonder he felt mad, though nothing justified him in the course he was about to pursue.

"They'll be back by, did they?" he muttered between his clinched teeth. "Tied me up with my own spun yarn, and left me in the burning sun! Coolly told me to shut up after I had kept my hands off them all this time—it's downright mutiny. This is their return for all my kindness to them!"

Unfortunately for young sailors, there are many brutes like Cheeseman, who, when at home, put on mild manners and profess to be very amiable, but as soon as they are afloat become perfect fiends.

"Here's your pistols, captain," said the mate; "I couldn't find mine. Now what are you going to do?"

"To catch those mutineers," angrily answered the skipper. "You don't think for one moment I mean to let them have the laugh on me? You go down to the beach and wait till I come."

"Captain," pleaded the man, "don't you think it would be as well to leave your pistols here? You are quick-tempered, and may commit murder before you are aware of it."

Cheeseman's reply was an oath and a savage look, and after examining the caps on his weapon he strode off to take his revenge on the twin brothers.

Little Rishiri Island was destitute of vegetation and uninhabited, therefore the searcher believed he would have no difficulty in finding the lads; but after walking completely round the place he was compelled to return to the beach without them, and as it was growing dusk, went back to the ship.

The next day he summoned the crew and informed them he would give a hundred dollars to whoever would capture the runaways, then handed both watches, and bade them search every nook and corner.

"It's no use, captain," said the mate that evening, when they were assembled upon the shore. "We've hunted over every foot of the island. The boys must have found a boat somewhere and started for the main land."

"They're not only mutinied but deserted," said Cheeseman, addressing his men. "This is the return I get for taking care of the fellows. You can go aboard now, and if to-morrow they are not down here begging to be taken off I shall start for the South."

"Won't old Captain Bowers feel bad if you don't bring them home with you?" observed the second mate, as they were rowed to the ship.

Cheeseman's answer being not at all polite, there was no further conversation upon the subject, though, truth to tell, he was beginning to feel exceedingly uncomfortable.

At daybreak he anxiously scanned the beach, expecting to see the brothers, but spite of his talk about starting, waited until noon, when he and the mate once more landed and made a final search.

"They must have tried to swim to the island of Yezo, and have been drowned or seized by the sharks," was his remark, as he reluctantly entered his boat. "This comes of taking green hands on board to oblige people. You can testify that I never struck those boys."

"Of course we can," was the response of the mates, who were afraid to speak out like men and tell the truth. "We always thought you treated them too well."

An hour afterward the anchor was raised and the vessel was on her way southward.

CHAPTER VI.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FRIENDLY JAPS.

A FEW moments after the *Ocean Belle* had quitted her anchorage a side-door of the store-house was unbolted, and the brothers cautiously emerged into the open air.

Upon taking leave of the captain they had made a hasty survey of the island, but finding it a mere level of sand surrounded by a bank of the same substance, they wisely sought shelter in the building, and fortunately for themselves, been locked in by Cheeseman, who never for a moment imagined they were secreted behind the coils of rope and casks of provisions.

Although, as it were, in the midst of plenty, the lads had suffered terribly from heat, thirst and hunger, their only consolation being in overhearing the sailors speak kindly regarding them, and expressing hopes that the boys had somehow got away safely.

"I can't stand being imprisoned any longer," said Dan, as he winked and blinked in the sunlight. "I wonder whether the ship has gone?"

"You stay here," answered Orville. "I'll crawl up and peep through the beach-grass growing on the top of the sand-ridge."

"Don't let them see you," pleaded his brother.

"Cheeseman's got a good glass, and can make out a rat five miles off."

Orville signaled all right, and moving forward, cautiously ascended the barrier, until his head was on a level with the top, when, glancing between two coarse tussocks, he beheld the ship making all sail down the coast, whereupon he motioned to his brother to join him.

"Say, Orv, haven't we done wrong?" whispered Dan, as the pair watched the receding vessel. "Cheeseman will go home and tell our folks nice things about us."

"Well, they won't believe him if he does," quickly answered the other. "Do you think either father or mother, or Nell or Rose would take his word before ours? You ought to know them better."

"I guess you are right," murmured Dan. "Suppose we go back to the store and see if we can't get something to eat and drink?"

Sliding backward, in order not to be spied out by the watchful captain, the pair returned to the warehouse, and unbolting some of the upper doors, admitted light into the building.

"Why, there's quite a collection here," cried Orville, as they glanced round the interior. "There's all sorts of things. I've heard the men speak of the Japs as a rich race. It's a depot, where the ships can come when they run short of supplies, and this book," taking up a volume, "contains receipts from a number of captains for stores obtained here."

It did not take the boys long to open a barrel of biscuit, but though they hunted everywhere they failed to discover any water.

"We shall have to get out of this," said Dan, after they had thoroughly inspected the island. "There's a whale-oil to drink, and we haven't come down to that."

"Hello!" shouted Orville, who just then spied a bottle in a corner of the store; "I wonder what's in that?" saying which he picked it up, uncorked it with his teeth, and applying his nose to the neck, ejaculated, "Hurrah! it's water!"

They seated themselves upon the floor and made a hearty meal, as they did so chatting over their future, and when they had rested proceeded to search the place.

Among a number of articles upon a shelf were some charts and books, which the brothers carefully examined.

"Here's a prize," cried Dan, opening a small volume.

"What is it?" asked Orville.

"Listen," was the rejoinder. "This book is furnished by the United States Government for the use of consols in Japan, whaling captains and other persons who may visit the islands of that empire."

"Well, what about it?" asked his brother.

"It is a collection of Japanese words and sentences, with their American equivalents," joyfully answered Dan. "Now, if we can only master its contents, we shall be able to talk to the natives, and they will not harm us."

"I don't feel afraid of that," remarked Orville, who was examining a chart. "See what is written on this." Saying which he read: "'American seas need have no fear of landing anywhere on the coast of Dai Nippon (Great Japan). Since so many Japanese have been educated in the States, the natives have learned to know us from other foreigners, and if protected by the National flag, travelers can journey from one end of the empire to the other, just as the Japanese do in our country. Signed, John Chase, master of the whaling bark *American Lass*, of New Bedford.'"

"That's good news," cried Dan. "But where are we going to get an American flag?"

"You bet there's one among these stores," quickly replied his brother. "We'll hunt round presently. Listen, there's something else written here: 'Little Rishiri is opposite the fishing village of Ha-to, the inhabitants of which will do everything in their power to assist shipwrecked people. If any such are cast upon this spot, they will find a boat stowed overhead, and if they require any provisions, must enter a receipt for the same in the book provided for that purpose."

"I am glad of that," gravely remarked Dan. "I wouldn't have stolen anything for the world. There's the boat," pointing up to the rafters; "it looks as if it were made of skins."

It did not take long to lower the craft and secure the paddles, after doing which the brothers conveyed it across the island and placed it upon the beach on the mainland side, where the water was free from surf.

When this was accomplished they returned to the warehouse, and, as Orville had predicted, discovered a lot of flags, among them being a boat's ensign; then Dan entered the following in the receipt-book:

"Tuesday, 4th June, 18—.

"We, the undersigned citizens of the United States, having been compelled to quit the ship *Ocean Belle* on account of Captain Ezekiah Cheeseman's bad treatment, have taken from the store-house the following articles:

"One United States flag—small size.
"Two Japanese and American dialogue books.
"One small bag of biscuit.
"One package Frank Leslie's publications.
"One skin canoe and paddles, which we will leave in the village of Ha-to, or wherever we may land. Please send a bill for these things to our parent, Mr. Fillamore, John Street, Coopertown, U. S. A., who will pay all expenses. At the same time inform him that up to date we were both well.

"ORVILLE and DANIEL FILLAMORE."

"P. S.—We will secure the store as safely as possible, and nail up the door through which we make our exit."

After accomplishing this the brothers proceeded to their boat and launched it, then clambered aboard, hoisted their flag on a bamboo staff, and seizing the paddles, started for the island of Yezo, the most northerly of the main group.

"Sit steady," cried Orville; "this craft is mighty cranky. We want to explore the land, not the bottom of the channel."

"Don't you worry yourself, brother," laughingly replied Dan, "we haven't got old Cheeseman aboard to capsize us."

The current was so strong that, instead of reaching Ha-to, they were swept down the coast, and as the sun set found themselves nearing a fleet of fishing-boats, on seeing which they waved their flag and shouted:

"Hi! hi! hi!"

In an instant the fishermen began to gather in their nets and yell fiercely; which so astonished the brothers that they hesitated about advancing.

"What shall we do, Orv?" asked Dan, who felt alarmed at the demonstration. "Those fellows evidently mean fight."

"Yes," answered Orville, who was narrowly watching their proceedings; "they are as mad as a lot of hornets. Give way, Dan, and let's get out of this."

The boys threw all their strength into their task and urged the canoe to the top of its speed, while following them in hot haste came a score of native crafts, the rowers of which stood up, gesticulated wildly, and screamed like a lot of Indians on the war-path.

CHAPTER VII.

AN INTERRUPTED CONCERT.

ALTHOUGH the brothers made the canoe fairly fly over the water, the Japanese soon overtook and surrounded them; finding which, the lads raised their paddles in the air and surrendered, when a fat old fisherman in one of the leading boats wiped his perspiring face and exclaimed:

"*Yoro shite!*" adding, in English, "All right, all right!"

It was a comical sight to witness the expression upon the boys' features as it dawned upon them that their pursuers were friends, not foes; the fact being that the Japs were eager to do everything in their power for the strangers, whom they they took for shipwrecked sailors.

"All right!" once more ejaculated the old man, raising a teapot and cup and motioning them to take a drink. "*Me Tomito Kosee!*"

"Dan," whispered Orville, as he took the proffered draught, "just look in the book and see what he says."

While the boy was searching the volume the men stood up in their boats and gazed at him with the most lively curiosity, and as all of them smiled good-naturedly, the brothers soon got over their scare.

"'*Me*' is 'I am,' presently observed Dan. "I guess 'Tomito Nose' is the old chap's name; he looks rather red in that texture."

"Suppose I put some questions to him?" said Orville. "You give him your copy and I'll use mine."

This style of communication was very embarrassing, for, though Tomita could read the Japanese characters, his attempts at speaking English were somewhat puzzling, and Orville was no better off, so, stepping into the fisherman's junkline boat, he seated himself by the old fellow's side and they exchanged the following sentences:

"From whence do you come?"
"We are Americans."
"Do you require assistance?"
"We wish to travel in your country."
"Have you any money?"

When Tomita pointed to this line, Orville turned to his brother and inquired:

"Shall we tell them about our belts?"
"Yes; they look honest enough," answered Dan.

Orville hunted the pages and presently pointed out:

"We have sufficient to pay our expenses."
"Come with us and have no fear. Our nation is friendly with yours."
"We will trust you."
"Is your boat safe?"
"No, it leaks."
"Come into ours."

"All right," said Orville, closing his book and receiving back the one from the Japanese.

In a few moments they had transformed their flag and the bundle of newspapers to Tomita's craft, after which the fisherman began to shout, scream, and propel their boats toward the shore, the old Jap leading the demonstration, and encouraging them to redoubled efforts by one another.

"I wonder what our folks would say if they could take a peep at us now?" remarked Dan. "We are going to have some strange adventures before we see them again. These Japanese seem to be real kind people, don't they?"

"Yes," nodded Orv; "though I thought when we first met them they were going for our scalps."

The boatmen pulled so fast that by dusk they arrived off a fishing village, and the boys saw lanterns being carried along the beach.

"*Ha-to!*" cheerfully exclaimed Tomita. "All right, all right."

As he said this the fishermen again set up discordant yells, which were answered back from the shore, and when they had thrown overboard their heavy anchors, a swarm of small crafts approached them and the brothers were invited to land.

1. Paper chase by the Westchester Hare and Hounds Club. 2. Carrying off the winner in the one-mile running race. 3. The "Anchor" in the light-weight tug-of-war. 4. A judge stopping a runner in a walking match. 5. Mr. Lafon's fall in the bicycle race.

COLUMBIA'S GAMES.—ATHLETIC GAMES OF THE COLUMBIA COLLEGE BOAT CLUB, AT GILMORE'S GARDEN, APRIL 4TH AND 5TH.

"They seem to be mighty glad to see us," said Dan, as they stepped upon the wharf. "If we did not know this was their style of welcoming, we might feel alarmed."

"Oh, we are quite distinguished people, don't you understand?" answered Orv. "It ain't every day they have a couple of American citizens to visit them. I believe they mean to honor us with a torchlight procession."

At that moment Tomita joined them, and ordering the spectators to fall back, motioned the strangers to follow him, whereupon they moved forward; accompanied by a numerous escort, all of whom indulged in their peculiar cries.

After passing through rows of thatched sheds devoted to the curing of fish, they reached their friend's house, and were conducted by him to a comfortable apartment, the floor of which was covered with mats six inches thick.

"Orville," quietly observed Dan, as Tomita quitted them to order supper, "let us take our boots off. Don't you see the Japanese leave theirs outside the room?"

"Lesson the first," said the other. "Now we are in Nippon, we will follow the native customs. I think it is a real clean idea."

When they had removed their boots they placed them in the entry, and on Tomita's return he smiled and pointed to them, saying:

"All right!"

In a short time Mrs. Tomita entered, followed by her two daughters, who, like herself, were clad in loose, blue cotton dresses, bound about the waist with wide sashes, and who, after being introduced to the guests, brought in a number of trays containing food, and motioned the boys to squat upon the floor and eat, having done which they retired, and left them to enjoy the meal.

Crossing their legs, like tailors, they attacked the viands, chatting merrily as they did so; meanwhile a crowd had assembled around the house, and was rapidly beginning to invade it.

Dan lifted the cover off a large bowl that almost filled one of the trays, and after inspecting its contents said:

"This is boiled rice. What have you got on yours?"

"Raw salmon, sweet potatoes, fried fish, stewed fish and tea," was the response. "The food is as clean and nice as the people."

Both of them being hungry and thirsty, they almost emptied the dishes, and were so intent upon their meal that they did not notice the people who had crept into the room in order to watch them.

"All right?" inquired Tomato, glancing into the apartment.

"First class!" they simultaneously replied. "If ever you come to our country we hope folks will treat you half as well."

As they said this their host caught sight of the intruders, and angrily ordered them to retire; however, the crowd outside was so dense it was impossible for them to do so.

The boys produced their books, and communicating with Tomita as before, gave him to understand they did not mind seeing the visitors, which appeared to afford him great satisfaction; while, as though desirous of amusing the strangers, some of the people began to sing, and on a samisen, a sort of square banjo, being passed in, a young man who was prominent among them proceeded to play an accompaniment.

A Japanese house is easily partitioned off into small rooms, or can be converted into one big hall, and as they neither use chairs, tables, sideboards nor bedsteads, there is no furniture to be moved.

After the performers had sung a number of songs, the banjo-player rose, and, advancing to the boys, proffered his instrument to Orville, as though inferring that they would like to have a specimen of his musical ability.

"What shall we give them?" he inquired of his brother.

"Play a lively breakdown," answered Dan; "then we will sing the 'Old Folks at Home.'"

The floor of the apartment was densely crowded with kneeling men, women and children, and the veranda of the house showed a wall of bronzed, good-humored faces; the shaven heads of the males contrasting strongly with the coiffures of the females; while, so intense was their eagerness to hear the American play, you might have heard a pin drop.

When Orville had tuned the instrument, he gave them a lively specimen of a plantation melody, which so excited them that, had space permitted, they would have indulged in a dance.

"This hits," he remarked, *sotto voce*, to Dan. "If our money doesn't last we can play our way through the country;" then, addressing their delighted audience, said, in solemn minstrel fashion, "The Old Folks at Home."

The brothers had excellent voices, and their rendering of the air visibly affected the women, who, though they could not understand the words, shed tears, and, when the singers ceased, looked so melancholy that Orville treated them to "Yankee Doodle," which he rattled off in fine style, receiving *encore* after *encore* for his spirited performance.

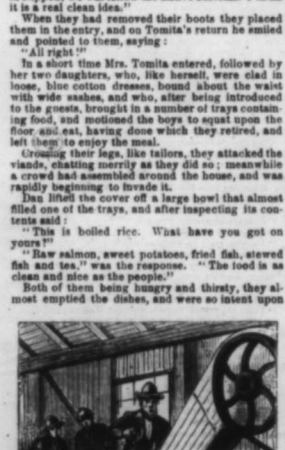
In the midst of the merriment some one outside raised a cry of alarm, hearing which, the women caught up their children and fled through the rear doors, and the men, after tightening their girdles, drew their swords, rushed into the streets, and uttered a cry of defiance.

"What is the matter?" demanded Orville of Mrs. Tomita, who was trembling with affright.

"*Ainos! Ainos!*" she sobbed, wringing her hands.

The boys seized a couple of weapons from a rack in the corner, and, sallying forth, soon found themselves in the thick of a desperate encounter.

[To be continued.]



A STRANGE DEATH.—LITTLE CHARLEY VINE'S FATAL LEAP INTO A CORN-BIN.

C-O-L-U-M-B-I-A'S GAMES.

THE first annual "Winters games" of the Columbia College Boat Club took place on the 4th and 5th of April. The numerous and varied events were well contested, and the whole affair was pronounced a great success.

The famous college cry was to be heard on all sides, and as Columbia showed to the front in several of the contests, the building rocked with the wild applause of their numerous friends.

The first event was a quarter-of-mile race for college men only, with two Columbia men as contestants—H. Le Roze and Percy Neyman. Neyman held a lead for a lap and a half, but Le Roze came in fifteen yards ahead, in 1 min. 15⅘sec.

The next event was a seventy-five-yards run in seven heats, and the several heats were won as follows, the time of the winner in each case being 7⅘secs.: First heat D. O. Fowler, S. I. A. C.; C. D., Cricl. Manhattan A. C., second; second heat, W. G. Morse, N. Y. A. C.; C. W. Kranshaar, second: third heat, C. S. Phillip, of New York; Thomas Houlahan, second; fourth heat, H. Mooyer; D. W. Hutchinson, second; fifth heat, W. J. Crowley, Columbia; Thomas Simpson, second; seventh heat, Horace H. Lee, University of Pennsylvania; Thomas Maloy, second.

The one-mile walk had three starters—Charles Eldridge, of Columbia; W. M. Watson, C. C. N. Y., and F. C. Hindekofer, of Harvard. Eldridge took the lead at the start, and ran splendidly. The Harvard man broke into a run, and was disqualified. The race was then easily won by Eldridge, who made the mile in 8 min.

A one-mile run, also open to college men only, had four starters—F. Fatmani and H. Schroeder, C. C. N. Y.; C. H. Trask, Jr., and R. T. P. Fiske, of Columbia. Fatmani dropped out at the fifth lap. Schroeder also dropped out, and the last lap was won by Fiske in 5 min. 13⅘ sec., with Trask a foot behind.

A light-weight tug-of-war between the Union Boat Club and the Scottish-American Club followed. The boatmen were in better trim and had the pull from the start.

In the first heat of a two-mile handicap walk, with ten starters, but three came in at the finish—Samuel N. Hoag (scratch), 16 min. 19⅘ sec.; Joseph A. Hesse, 17 min. 35 sec.; and Otto J. Frank, 17 min. 39 sec.

A tug-of-war between teams of the New York Athletic Club and the Eagle Baseball Club was an easy victory for the former. A one-mile handicap walk following had eight good starters, and was won by J. A. Breslin, in 8 min. 39 sec. A half-mile run handicap, with nine starters, was won by R. H. Sayre, of Columbia. The second heat of the one-mile handicap walk had a good field of starters. Morris Peterson, a boy from the Essex Athletic Club, was favorite, but the heat was won by William S. Goodwin, in 8 min. 15⅘ sec. The 220-yards run, with four starters, was a final dash. It was for college men only, and Evert J. Wendell, of Harvard, won in 26⅘ sec., with T. J. Brereton, of Columbia, second.

In the second test of the two-mile handicap walk Eldridge did not show up. The heat was won by J. B. Clarke, in 17 min. 29⅘ sec., J. Camerson second, and J. T. Goodwin third.

A race between a bicycle ridden by Lafon and a velocipede by W. G. Morse, in which a quarter of a mile was given the velocipede, was won easily by the bicycle in 4 min. 16 sec., Mr. Lafon sustaining an undignified fall while turning at lightning speed.

The finish to the evening was an exhibition of "hare and-hounds" by members of the Westchester Club. Two hares ran first about the track and then over railings and down into the lower parts of the building, while the hounds followed, amid roars of laughter from the delighted spectators.

The second day of the exciting college games was opened by a four hours go-as-you-please race. One hundred and nine athletic amateurs started on the journey. They were sent off in two heavy squads, and were attended to by as many sets of scorers. Within five minutes of the start they stretched entirely round the track in Gilmore's Garden. The sight was one not often seen, and not easily forgotten. At the end of the first half-hour about a dozen had already dropped out. E. Foster, Plainfield, N. J., led the line; he had run 8 miles, 3 laps. John C. Byron, Babylon, L. I., came next, 8 miles, 1 lap; J. J. Riley, New York, third, 8 miles.

About fifty athletes were on the track at the end of three hours. C. L. Mann, of the Deaf and Dumb Institute, headed the line, having gone 22 miles, 2 laps. C. J. Leach was second, 21 miles, 6 laps; C. A. J. Queckburner, Scottish-American Club, third, 21 miles, 5 laps.

At the finish forty-five of the contestants were on the track. C. L. Mann, the deaf mute, led the string with 29 miles; Charles B. Thompson, of Jersey City, came next, 28 miles; C. A. J. Queckburner was third, 27 miles, 7 laps; William Irvine and C. J. Leach were fourth, each making 27 miles, 6 laps.

R. H. Sayre, of Columbia, and George L. Heine of the University of Pennsylvania, competed in the running high jump. Heine jumped 5 feet 3 inches, Sayre 4 feet nine.

A 440-yards hurdle handicap race over 21 hurdles had three starters. P. McMahon, of the Jersey City Athletic Club won, in 1 min. 10 sec.

Five men started in the one-mile walk. Charles Eldridge, of the Columbia Boat Club, took the first medal. Time, 7:23.

Twelve started in a one-mile run handicap. William Ropes Trask, who was handicapped 44 yards, won in 4:57 3-5.

The first heat of the 75-yard run, handicap, second trial heats, was won by C. S. Phillips, in 8 sec. W. G. Morse took the second heat, in 8 sec.; W. J. Crowley the third, in 7 4-5 sec. Thomas Simpson took the fourth, in 8⅘ sec. The fifth and race was won by H. Mawber. Time, 7 4-5 sec.

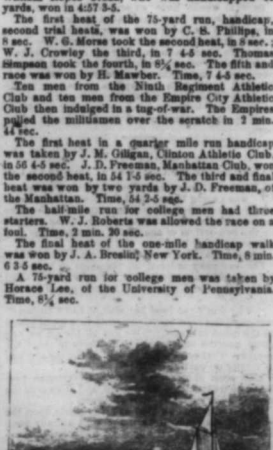
Ten men from the Ninth Regiment Athletic Club and ten men from the Empire City Athletic Club then indulged in a tug-of-war. The Empires pulled the militiamen over the scratch in 2 min. 44 sec.

The first heat in a quarter mile run handicap was taken by J. M. Gilligan, Clinton Athletic Club, in 56 4-5 sec. J. D. Freeman, Manhattan Club, won the second heat, in 54 1-5 sec. The third and final heat was won by two yards by J. D. Freeman, of the Manhattan. Time, 54 2-5 sec.

The half-mile run for college men had three starters. W. J. Roberts was allowed the race on a foul. Time, 2 min. 30 sec.

The final heat of the one-mile handicap walk was won by J. A. Breslin, New York. Time, 6 min. 6 3-5 sec.

A 75-yard run for college men was taken by Horace Lee, of the University of Pennsylvania. Time, 8⅘ sec.



A REGULAR SEA DOG.—CAPT. BUNCE'S SPITZ DOG SWIMS FORTY MILES TO REACH THE SHIP.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—THE TRAINING-SCHOOL, CORNER OF BROADWAY AND FOURTH STREET.

The three-mile bicycle race (four entries) was exciting. W. T. Addison, of Ravenswood, kept the lead for two miles and a half, when J. Laton, of the Essex Athletic Club, dashed by him in beautiful style and won easily. Time, 14 min. 41 3-5 sec.

The light-weighing tug-of-war between six of the Union Boat Club and six of the New York Athletics was won by the New York Athletics in 11 min. 11 sec. The Unions had intrenched themselves in the school, but it was too light to hold.

The final heat in the two-mile handicap walk was won by Joseph A. Hess, Empire Athletic Club. Time, 16 min. 53 sec.

The evening's sport ended with a tug-of-war by a team of six men from Company B, Seventh Regiment, and a like number from Company F, Twenty-second Regiment. It took the Seventh just 3 min. 47½ sec. to pull their opponents over the scratch.

The meeting was pronounced by every visitor to the garden to have been a great success.

A STRANGE DEATH.

A SAD accident happened at Centertown, Ill., recently. Charles Vine, son of Albert Vine, while playing in the elevator of his father with other boys, jumped into a bin from which they were drawing corn, and was drawn under. When taken out he was dead.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—"CALL ME IN THE MORNING EARLY."

A REGULAR SEA DOG.

CAPTAIN BUNCE, of the schooner *Leonida*, of Huntington, had a large Spitz dog, which he picked up in the middle of the Sound two years ago. The dog had been kept on his vessel, and twice succeeded in saving life while lying at anchor. Recently the captain weighed anchor and started for New York, leaving the dog ashore. When half an hour out the dog was seen to go to the dock, jump into the water and swim out after the vessel, whose sails were still in sight. Curious eyes followed the dog until it was supposed he had sunk from exhaustion. They were mistaken, for on Thursday, while the boat was at anchor in New York, the dog made its appearance on the wharf, and jumping on deck began licking the captain's hand. How he reached New York is a matter of conjecture.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.

THE CURIOUS USES TO WHICH MESSENGER-BOYS ARE PUT.

OUR modern life and customs tend more and more in the direction of economy—not so much in the mere matter of money as in what represents money's worth—time and exertion. To accomplish desired results with absolute certainty, with as much rapidity and as little personal labor as possible, is becoming the great *desideratum* in the thousand and one departments of everyday existence. It is on a knowledge of this fact that the District Telegraph system, as it is called, is based.

This system may be said to be based upon boys. Its whole business is transacted by boys from eight years to eighteen. Since its introduction it has given employment to over fifteen hundred boys, of whom over seven hundred are at present in its service.

In connection with the American District Telegraph system there is a training-school, or school for instruction, for the education of the messenger-boys in their peculiar duties. This school for instruction is located on the second story of the principal offices of the company, at the corner of Fourth Street and Broadway, and embraces a large school-room, and occupies the entire time of several instructors.

In this school for training the boys are taught many most valuable lessons, not only to aid them as messengers but to help them through life. They are taught the importance of time, the need of prompt obedience, the importance of discipline; while they are thoroughly instructed in all the details of their duties as messengers.

In addition to the training-school there is a drill-room in Bridge Street, where the boys are taught something of military discipline and tactics. They are instructed to set up straight, to march in regular order, to salute their superior officers, and so forth.

The American District Telegraph Company has likewise established a system of promotion among the messenger-boys, which is calculated to give every boy a chance, and to reward substantially the deserving. A smart boy not only has his salary as a messenger-boy raised from time to time, but he is raised from the ranks of the messengers and promoted to be a sergeant, or an assistant manager. Medals are also presented to deserving boys as a token of esteem from the officers of the company.

This system, though of comparatively recent origin, has grown into proportions far beyond the original ideas of its projectors. There are now thirty-nine different district Telegraph Companies in the United States, the principal and parent company being located in New York, and embracing the entire metropolis in its radius, from the Battery to the Harlem River, or One Hundred and Thirty-second Street.

The central office, or headquarters, of this company is on Broadway, corner of Fourth Street, and a visit to this building will give a vivid idea of the magnitude, yet minuteness, of the system. The headquarters, or central offices, occupy the whole of the second and third floors of the large building, and comprise some twenty or more rooms, large and small, which are devoted to separate, and sometimes peculiar, purposes.

Boys are the instruments, the agents, the all-in-all, of the District Telegraph; and it is perhaps not the least of the commendable features of this institution that it gives useful and fairly paid work to hundreds of boys who, without it, would probably be deprived of employment, and who, through its means, are trained in habits of industry, energy and obedience.

Among the features of the headquarters building are a printing office, where the various tickets used in the operations of the system are printed; a repair shop, where the telegraphic instruments are kept in order; a tailor shop, where the uniforms worn by the messengers are preserved in their integrity, and a canvassing room, where the theatre ticket and seats for the opera department are carried on. This branch of the District Telegraph transactions is becoming quite a feature. From this canvassing room a telephone is connected with the box-office of the Academy of Music, so that an operator at his desk in Fouth Streets can communicate directly with the operatic ticket-seller in Irving Place.

Then there is a supply room, an odd sort of curiosity shop, in which all the miscellaneous articles used in the District Telegraph operations are kept on hand in considerable quantities. In this apartment messengers' boots, at $1.50 a pair, and messengers' hats, $8 a dozen, lie alongside of batteries and tickets; and all sorts of contrivances for recording and registering messages are displayed beside huge maps of the various districts of the metropolis, on which maps every District Telegraph instrument in the city is marked, the maps of the down-town districts, along Wall Street, presenting a series of lines crossing and recrossing so closely that only an expert can decipher the exact locality of any one particular instrument.

But the most interesting feature of the building is the large room known as the instruction or training room for boys. This is a schoolroom in which the boys who wish to become messengers are educated in the philosophy and practice of the craft. The room itself is large and airy, and presents the ordinary aspects of a schoolroom, with benches, books, pegs, an elevated desk for the instructor at one end, etc. But the boys are designated not by name but by number, and the books are all of one kind—tariff books, time books, etc.; books dealing only with street distances, allowances of time and rate of charges, which serve the would-be messenger-boy in lieu of geography, history, grammar and arithmetic.

From ten to eighty boys are daily instructed in this room—the roll being called at half-past eight in the morning. A boy who is five minutes late is detained after the termination of school hours at three o'clock.

At first the District Telegraph Company experienced difficulty in procuring its boys. Now its principal difficulty is to keep within reasonable limits the number of applicants. Every boy applying for a situation must give his name, address, and state who and what his parents are. This statement is examined, and if found correct, and if his references for character are acceptable, he is then given what is called a "special" or transitory number, which designates him while in training-school. It was formerly the custom to send "the new boy" to accompany some regular messenger on his routine tour, but this practice is no longer followed. It is claimed by Mr. Taguer, the Superintendent of the Training School, that when a boy leaves his care he is fully qualified for any department of the messenger service, and needs not to be shown anything which properly comes under his duties. The boy is first taught the supreme importance of being on time. The value of time as a factor in transactions is known to no man living better than to the messenger-boy. He must be on time or be off altogether. The boy is next instructed in the importance of obedience. Absolute, unquestioning, yet not unreasoning, obedience. He must obey implicitly, first, the general rules of the office, and second, the particular instructions of the party who requires his services. He is also taught the danger of delay and the necessity for all possible haste in the discharge of his messages. He must travel as fast as he can; he must get to and from a place as soon as possible; he must use his legs; he must also use his wits. He must be a machine, but he must not suffer his machinery to be utilized for evil purposes. He must keep his eyes and ears open. He must suspect where suspicion should be excited. He must know whether "everything is all right" or whether "something is wrong." He must know just when to invoke the aid of a policeman.

At the time of the writer's visit to the training-school a couple of bright lads, Nos. 948 and 913, were being "interviewed" in regard to certain portions of the District Telegraph catechism, for the benefit of some of the "new boys."

"What is the first thing you are to do when told by a subscriber or patron to go on a message for him?" asked the teacher of No. 948.

"I am to ask him three questions," was the boy's reply.

"What are these three questions?"

"'Am I to deliver the message to any one else if the party to whom it is addressed does not happen to be in?'—'Is there to be an answer?'—'If so, how long am I to wait?'"

"If you are stopped by any one or interfered with in the performance of your duty, what are you to do?"

"Call a policeman; or, if no policeman is at hand, do the best I can, but deliver my message as directed, at all events."

"What is the great principle which must guide you in all your messages?"

"To find the right person in the right place."

No. 948 evidently understood his business. Nor was 913 behind his companion.

"How would you find the right person in the right place," asked the teacher of No. 913, "in the business portion of the city, if there was any doubt?"

"I would consult the nearest directory."

"How would you find the right person in a hotel?"

"By going to the office and asking the clerk on duty."

"How in a store?"

"By asking the bookkeeper or floor-walker, or some clerk who was on duty."

"How in a tenement-house?"

"By inquiring of a janitor, if there was one on the first floor; if not, I would look for the party on all the floors."

"Suppose a gentleman was to deliver you his carpet-bag, with instructions to meet him at the Grand Central Depot at a certain time, what would you do?"

"I would take care of the carpet-bag, would be at the depot precisely on time, and give the gentleman his carpet-bag."

"Suppose some other party were to ask you to deliver to him the bag?"

"I would refuse."

"If the other party persisted in this demand?"

"I would call the aid of a policeman on duty, or any one of the officials."

"But suppose a party were to come to you and show you a note which he says is from the gentleman who gave you the bag, requesting you to deliver the bag to him?"

"I would refuse to give him the bag."

"But supposing the note was really from the gentleman—what would you do then?"

"Still I would refuse to give up the carpet-bag,

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—A NIGHT PATROL ON DUTY.

unless the gentleman who gave me the bag had told me at first that he might send a note for the bag, and had given me a specimen of his handwriting."

"If you are sent with a letter to a lady, would you give the letter to any other person, who claimed to be a relative, etc.?"

"No, sir, unless I had been told so; otherwise, if the party was not in, I would bring the letter back."

"Do parties to whom messages are addressed ever refuse to sign the receipt?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you do then?"

"I ask them respectfully to sign, because it is one of the rules of the office, and I tell them that if I were to deliver a message without getting a receipt for it I would be punished."

"Then, if they still refuse to sign it?"

"I would refuse to deliver the message, and would take it back to the office. No signature, no delivery."

"Suppose the party to whom a message or package is delivered cannot write?"

"Then I would see that he made his mark, and that somebody, if possible, witnessed his making it."

"If you are delayed in getting an answer, what would you do?"

"I would tell the party delaying me the rules of the office, charge according to the time tariff for my delay, get a voucher from the party who delayed me, and collect when I delivered the answer."

"If the party addressed don't live where he is addressed, what do you do?"

"If I think there may be a mistake in the exact number, I ring four door-bells each side of the house addressed, and also inquire on the opposite side of the street."

Boy No. 948 was once more catechized.

"Suppose you were sent to deliver unaddressed circulars, what would you do?"

"I would put the circulars under the front door, push them under as far as they would go, ring the bell, and then run down the steps, and do the same way with the next house."

"How would you deliver circulars at tenement-houses?"

"I would deliver them on all the floors—to all the people I met in the halls—and I would knock at every door and hand a circular to the person answering the knock."

"How would you deliver circulars in a hotel or depot?"

"I would ask permission at the desk of the clerk, or anybody in charge, to deliver the circulars."

"If permission was refused?"

"Then I would stand by the door or entrance, and distribute my circulars to parties passing in or out."

"If you ran short of circulars, would you borrow any from another messenger?"

"No, I would not. It would be against the rules. I would return to the office and ask for more."

"If you had more circulars than were needed, would you throw them away, or hand them round indiscriminately?"

"No, sir. I would bring them back to the office and account for them. There is a punishment for wasting or destroying circulars."

So there is, under what is called the "Malicious Mischief Act;" and the boy knew all about that "Act." In fact, the two boys evidently knew all about their business, and were looked upon by the rest of the boys in training with mingled awe and admiration.

A third boy, who was even further advanced in the mysteries of his craft than those just examined, was then asked by the teacher:

"What he would do to one he had to deliver stock certificates or certified checks to a certain broker or banker with whose precise business-address on the street he was unacquainted?"

"Why, I would run as fast as I could to one of the two regular boys on the street, and ask him where to go, and then as soon as he told me, I would go where I was told."

"Where are these regular boys on the street stationed?"

"One boy is stationed at the corner of Broad Street and Exchange Place, the other at the corner of Wall Street and Broad."

"What is the duty of these regular boys on the street?"

"They know by being down there all the time where every banker and broker does business, and so they are able to tell all the other messengers who want to know."

SOMETHING ABOUT HICKORY AND OTHER NUTS OF OUR MARKETS.

THE hickory-nut scarcely needs a word of description; every boy and girl knows it well, and will readily discover it on the right-hand corner of the picture. One is represented half inclosed in the husk, and another separate. Its Latin name is *Carya alba*, and it is almost a brother to the pecan-nut, *Carya Olivæformis*, so named on account of its olive shape. The pecan-nut is generally supposed to be a foreign nut, brought from some distant country over the water, but this is a mistaken idea, as many of our Western boys and girls could testify, who gather them by the bushels every year throughout many of our Western States, although Texas furnishes the main supply to our markets.

If we turn back to the picture a few others of our American varieties may be seen. There, directly in the foreground, is the little three-cornered beech-nut (*Fagus ferruginea*), with its green, shiny husk, and further up, nestling in the top of the group, the well-known burr of chestnuts.

Ah! boys, how many recollections will this little picture bring to our minds!—recollections, perhaps, of a stroll to a neighboring wood, and of a large tree heavily laden with the open stars of tempting fruit—recollections, may be, of how a bushel of those sweet nuts became hurriedly stowed away in a big bag, which happened to be with you, and how, with joy as your escort, you shouldered your prize, and with most strange haste led your steps homeward. Perchance you may have arrived there safe with your prize, but had you been in my place you would now distinctly remember that your enthusiasm was brought to an untimely end, that the old man on the white horse had suddenly appeared upon the scene, and had already got close upon you. The bang! bang! and the rattling of the shot through the tree-tops would still tingle in your ears, and vividly bring to mind the scene that ensued, in which, by the interference of an obstinate stone-wall, bag and all came to grief, and the nuts were scattered broadcast. This much you would remember, but you would wonder to this day how it was that you got over "that brook," and how it was that a piece of your nether garments came to be discovered on the top of a certain picket-fence in the neighborhood of "Tarney's Woods."

What boy, in looking up into a chestnut-tree, would imagine that his eyes were gazing at the *Castanea vesca?* yet that is its name in botany, the word *Castanea* signifying chestnut, and the latter indicating the variety. If we look back to our illustration we will see just below, and a little to the left of the nut in question, another large variety. This is known as the Italian chestnut. It is imported into our markets in large quantities, and seems to be a favorite article of trade with many of our street-venders. It is generally eaten roasted, being too coarse in texture to be palatable in a raw state.

Perhaps it may be said that for real oddity in its manner of growth the cashew-nut may bear the palm. This nut is shown, three of them together, directly in the foreground of our picture, looking rather more like three fat beans than actual nuts. But this is not its great peculiarity. It has an odd trick of growing directly on the outside of the end of a pear-shaped receptacle, reminding one of a fat kidney-bean stuck into the end of a Bartlett pear. This nut is native of the West Indies, as well as other tropical countries, and is scientifically known as *Anacardium occidentale*. The tree which produces it is very large, somewhat resembling our native walnut-tree. It yields a gum known as cadji gum, valuable for many purposes. The pear-like receptacle of this fruit forms its chief feature in point of size, and possesses an agreeable sub-acid flavor; the juice, when extracted and fermented, forms a pleasant wine. The nut itself is of an ash-color, and has an inviting look; but woe to him who is thus misled, and, as often happens, attempts to crack it with his teeth; for just beneath the outer case there is a layer of black, extremely acrid, caustic oil, which soon makes itself known and felt in the excoriated, smarting lips and tongue. This oil is commonly applied to the floors of houses in India to preserve them, and when roasted, which it often is, it seems to destroy its caustic properties, for which reason the kernels are roasted before being eaten, and then become wholesome and delicious. The process of roasting has to be carefully conducted, for should the flames being too intense as to produce severe inflammation in the faces of persons approaching too near. The cashew-nut is another rarity with us, and is never imported excepting as a novelty.

The pistachio-nut, one of which is represented a little to the left of the cashews, is scarcely less of a novelty with us. It is seldom seen or known here in its original form, being utilized chiefly as a confection, or in the form of a flavoring extract. The well-known delicious pistach ice-cream is a familiar example, and where the flavor will not be remembered the delicate green color which the extract imparts will suffice to call it to mind. Thus the word *pistach* is generally applied, and associated merely with a *flavor*, or color, and few really know its origin.

These nuts grow in clusters upon the tree. They are about an inch in length, and of a reddish-green color and very agreeable flavor. The nut is much cultivated in the Greek Islands, Asia Minor, Syria, and in many parts of Southern Europe. The Turks and Greeks use this fruit in great abundance.

The tree which produces it is the *Pistachia lentiscus*, and belongs to the same natural Order as the cashew-nut last described, and like that tree it yields a valuable gum. When I was quite young I knew an old farmer in Connecticut who took special delight in his "kitchen-garden" and his apple and peach orchards, and took every occasion to indulge in what he would call "showing off" the same appreciation. He was a clever old fellow, and I well remember the time when he "buttonholed" me, and in his good-natured way coaxed me in to "take a look" at his place, promising to let me eat "all I could swaller," if I only would. Of course, it did not need much urging under these circumstances, and I followed him. Well, his apple-trees were healthy and laden with fruit, his kitchen-garden was about perfection, but his peach-trees were not on a par with the rest.

I had complimented him on everything until I came to these, but here I stopped and made bold enough to tell him that they were not quite up to the standard. "Wall, I don't know but what you're right," he replied. "I don't take so much stock in them as I do onto the rest. I tell you the climate's agin 'em—tew fur noth. I've done everything in the wide worldgitor 'em, and they don't give no thanks for it, to speak on; they're pesky ungrateful about it. Now, there's a tree here, he continued, as he walked in the direction of it, "that's got a complaint that I never see in a peach-tree before. Don't know what to make on it—some blight or gall, I kinder reckon."

We were now directly beneath the branches of the tree, which was quite small and heavily laden with green fruit. With his hand tapping the trunk of the tree as he spoke, my friend continued: "Naow, the one jest about everything that kin be done for this peaky thing, and it don't make no difference. Just as soon as they get up to a sizeable figger, and begin tew look like suthin', they bust, and that's the end on 'em, and in tew or three days they marvel up and look like a last year's Stoga boot. I never see sech lookin' things for peaches, and I've jest about given up the idee of tryin' to stop the tarnal complaint."

Now, how many of our readers will have imagined the nature of the "complaint" that had troubled this tree, in spite of the farmer's watchful care? Here was an individual who, for over four years, had worked and worried and wondered over this tree, and had never dreamed that the dried, shrunken fruits which yearly fell to the ground by quarts, and which had so perplexed him, were nothing other than delicious sweet almonds, four successive crops of which had been allowed to fall and rot on the ground through mere ignorance! His having the nature of the complaint is another instance of mistaken identity in this particular. A woman in Jersey had an almond-tree which had bloomed and borne its fruit for over six years, and never imagined it to be anything but a diseased peach-tree.

The similarity is easily explained. The almond is closely allied to the peach, both of which belong to the same genus, *Amygdalus*. In its early stages of growth the almond closely resembles the peach, but as it matures a close examination will reveal a marked difference. In the peach the fruit or pulp is soft and fleshy. In the almond this fruit is more succulent, and when ripe it becomes hard, and splits and shrivels so that the nut drops out. The tree grows to about the size of the common plum, and the flowers bloom early in the Spring, often before the leaves appear. It is very rarely that an almond-tree can be found in New England, and never excepting in a most sheltered spot.

The botanical name of the sweet almond is *Amygdalus communis*, variety *dulcis*. They are common in our markets. The Jordan almonds are considered the finest, and are mostly imported from Malaga. There are other varieties known as the Valentia, Barbary, and Italian almonds, but the distinction is comparatively slight, all being mere varieties of the same species. This nut will readily be seen in the right-hand corner of our illustration, broken asunder, showing the kernel.

Occasionally as we pass through our thoroughfares we observe on the fruit-stands a peculiar nut, reminding us somewhat of our well-known hazel nut, but differing from it in the shape of the husk, which is longer and more tapering. This is known as the English filbert (*Corylus avellana*), and is imported in considerable quantities to our markets. There are many varieties of this fruit, all included under the same scientific name. The variety figured is not the most common with us; the nuts are very long and thin-shelled, and the kernel possesses a delicious flavor. A cluster of these is shown directly over the pistach, in the foreground of the picture. The filbert is one of the most familiar of all our imported nuts, and one of the most ancient in use, being mentioned in the earliest Scriptures. There is a variety of this fruit known as the cob-nut, much esteemed in England. Besides being used as a relish a considerable quantity of these nuts are utilized in the manufacture of oil, much used by watchmakers and artists in oil-colors.

There is one prominent and conspicuous member of the group which has not yet been described, and which for rarity stands tortoise-of-any. Our readers who have observed the picture will all have noticed it lying close beneath the burr of chestnuts, and many will doubtless have wondered at its singular and unfamiliar outline. This nut is blessed with more than its share of oiliness, of which the *Souarrow*, *Sutcarrow* and *Demarara* nut are the most common. As the last mentioned name implies, it is a native of Demarara, South America, and it is the produce of a most gigantic tree. The sarukwa nut is very large, and is also somewhat kidney-shaped, and its surface is covered with wart-like protuberances. On one of its sides it presents a peculiar pinched and gathered appearance, and altogether reminds one of a small bag filled with pellets, and with the opening tightly drawn together. This nut is without doubt the greatest rarity of any we have pictured. It is much esteemed by the natives of Demarara, and this fact, together with the great difficulty of gathering them on account of the magnitude of the trees, will perhaps in a measure explain their scarcity in our markets. In its natural state the fruit grows after the manner of the Brazil-nut, three or four of them being inclosed in a large spherical ball, as large as a child's head, and of very solid texture. The kernel of this nut is perhaps the most agreeable of all the nut kind, possessing all the bland and sweet properties of the almond, together with a softer consistency and a delicious milky flavor. The timber is highly valued for shipbuilding, and the oil is also by no means rare with us, utilized in Demarara, and is said to equal that of the olive in sweetness.

But one more specimen of the group now remains to be described, and with this we will say good-by for the present. This is the monstrous coco-de-mer, which he held on his knees. I drew near and observed him. By the use of a large jack-knife I saw him wedge apart the scales of the cone, from the interior of which I presently saw him remove two purplish-brown objects, about an inch in length, which he straightway proceeded to crack and devour with evident relish. I immediately recognized the nuts and bought the remaining portion of the cone from him. In the course of a week it had become so dried that the scales contracted completely and the nuts fell out of themselves in profusion. They were an inch in length, rather oblong and three-sided, with a very thick, hard yellowish-brown shell, covered with a purplish powder, which easily rubbed off; each nut was provided with a "wing," consisting of a whitish, flat membrane surrounding its edge, and extending a half inch or more from its larger end. This is peculiar to the seeds of nearly all pines, and is probably intended to break their fall from the tree; this perhaps drops off and the fruits lose their powdery covering, so that when they reach our market they are merely clean, light ocher-colored nuts, with no vestige of their original peculiarities. Owing to the hardness of the shell, cracking the exterior would be a difficult task were it not that as the shell seasons it cracks down on one side sufficiently to allow the introduction of the blade of a penknife or nut-pick, which, with very little pressure, causes the shell to split asunder, disclosing the fine oblong, white kernel enveloped in its thin film of gauzy brown.

This fruit is the produce of the stone, or Italian pine (*Pinus pinea*), native of southern Europe and the Levant. The number of nuts contained in one cone is very large, often as many as four hundred, and the yield from a single tree is enormous. They are a favorite article of food with rich and poor throughout Italy, and the kernels possess a slight flavor of turpentine, which is quite pleasant.

There are other species of pine which yield edible seeds. The prickly-coned pine (*Pinus sabiniana*), the nenda pine (*Pinus guardiana*), and others, but those of the stone pine are considered the best, and are the most common with us. The pignon-nut is represented in the extreme left of the picture, two of them, resting on their parent scale, and while the reader is searching for them we will bring our article to a close.

G. H. W.

THREE BOYS.

A Story of a High School.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT supper-time that evening Miss Almira more than hinted that she knew the source of the remarkable items of news in the *Clarion*, but Sol parried her remarks with a graphic account of the manner and spirit in which Deacon Smith had received his share of Rickards's editorial work.

"I do not wonder he is indignant," emphatically replied Miss Almira; "the attack upon him was unfeeling. That fellow, Rickards, is destitute of taste and judgment. He is not fit to edit a newspaper."

"Puts in altogether too much poetry, and such like trash," remarked her mother, with a cast-iron smile.

Sol looked at Van and grinned as he added:

"Mr. Rivington is fond of poetry."

"Is he?" asked Almira.

"Indeed he is. I'm trying to encourage him to write some. I know he could if he'd try. Patrick Nolan, now—Miss Almira, did Patrick ever show you any of his poetry?"

"He write poetry?"

"Why not, then? I'll repeat one of his verses:

"'Woodpile, sawbuck,
Cornerib and bin,
If I burned 'em all up
Would it be a sin?'

There, now, what do you think of that? Better'n anything ever was printed in the *Clarion*."

"Hold your tongue," whispered Pat, almost angrily. "You know I never made that same, or any other."

"Never mind, Patrick," Mrs. Porrance was beginning, when there came a great knock at the front door, and a moment later the expressman announced:

"A package for Mr. Rivington."

"That's me. Anything to pay?"

"No. Prepaid from New York. Sign the receipt, that's all."

There was something in the outer appearance of that package which made Van's fingers tremble as he wrote his name, but Sol shouted:

"Just like mine, by jingo! Van, if somebody hasn't sent you a gun. I say, whose life did you save, I'd like to know?"

"Another gun in the house? Oh, dear me!" gasped Miss Almira; but her mother growled at her:

"Nonsense! He'd better have a good one than any old affair he can pick up in Bonkerville. Think of that carbine. It wasn't even good for blackbirds."

Sensible woman.

So at least thought Van, for he said:

"I'll open it right here."

And before he could make up her mind whether or not it would pay to scream the job was done.

Sol Rogers was busy with the other half, and another moment told them they were not mistaken.

"Just like mine. Cartridges the same size," shouted Sol. "When mine are used up I can steal yours."

"It's from my father!"

That was all Van could say, just then, and he put the letter he had found tied to the guncase carefully into his breast-pocket, to be read through when he should get to his room.

"Oh, won't we have a time!" sung Sol, as he almost danced around the room, and Pat Nolan could scarcely help wishing his own weapon a double-barreled breech-loader.

"Never mind," he said; "mine's as heavy with one barrel as yours is with two, and it takes three times the powder and shot to load her."

"Van," said Sol, "I hope you can go for spotted foxes all day and all night."

"Yes, and for blackbirds, too."

"And if you shoot a chipmunk, there 'll be something left of him to bring home."

There was more work for Pat at the woodpile and at the barn; but the other two boys hurried upstairs with their new prizes.

They found, on comparison, that their respective guns were really of the same gauge and make, but Van's was, if anything, the handsomer of the two.

"We'll know 'em apart," said Sol. "Shall you try yours first on a pane of glass as I did?"

"No; but I move we go for the woods on Saturday."

"Squirrels? It's early for 'em, but we might find a few."

"Anything and everything. That is, anything in the game line."

"No cows, Van."

"Nor policeats."

"I don't know about that. It might depend on who owned the barnyard. If it was my dear friend the deacon, now, I wouldn't answer for it."

Thus Van got into a corner and read his letter, and even Sol Rogers had enough of common sense not to bother him.

It was a grand, good letter, just such as a wise father would write to a son in whom he had any amount of solid confidence. Such fathers are very apt to have boys from they can trust with guns, or almost anything else.

Which is a splendid thing for the boys as well as for the fathers.

The next day was Friday, and what Sol Rogers called "Smith's grist" began to make its appearance.

Mrs. Porrance knew how to make johnnycake, however, and sour milk and-so forth cost her absolutely nothing. Pat and Van, therefore, in consideration of the rich maple syrup which came on with it, were disposed to think well of their first trial of the corn question.

"What's your complaint, Sol?" asked Van. "Seems to me it's good."

"So it is. I like it myself. So do I like the Constitution of the United States. They're both good. You wait awhile."

The hasty-pudding and milk they had at noon was also good. The very best of its kind.

Even Sol was compelled to own up as much as that. He could not even find any special fault with the corn-cakes that came on for supper.

In fact, Sol gave his friends a surprise over those corn-cakes. He praised them extravagantly and openly at the very table, and then he wound up with:

"Mrs. Porrance, old Martin says Pat's gun 'll be finished this evening. You'll want him to go with us into the woods to-morrow, of course. We'll bring you home something nice for Sunday's dinner."

"I don't know about that. He will have some errands to do."

"Of course he will. Van and I'll help him do them after supper. These are the best corn-cakes I ever ate in all my life."

"It might be managed——"

"Mrs. Porrance," exclaimed Van, "I'll help Pat with his errands, so he can go hunting with us. But can't we have some more of that beautiful johnnycake for breakfast, such as you gave us this morning?"

Certainly."

"And won't you write out the recipe for me to send home? That and the corncakes?"

Of course I will. On the whole, I don't know but I'll have to let Patrick go for once. He killed most of the blackbirds."

"He's a wonderful shot, Mrs. Porrance. We might fall in with a flock of squirrels——"

"Squirrels!" exclaimed Almira. "They don't fly."

"Don't they? Well, you know more about birds than I do. Pat is to go with us, then, Mrs. Porrance?"

"If all the errands are done," said Mrs. Porrance. "I do not wish to be hard on him."

"Thank you, ma'am," enthusiastically exclaimed Pat Nolan, who had held in as long as he could. "Now for me errands and me new gun. Won't I go for all there is!"

"Spotted foxes and all," gravely added Sol Rogers.

But all three of them were too much excited over what they rightly considered their "victory" to stay for any more cakes. All Mrs. Porrance had to do was to give her directions, and never had she known her several errands and "chores" done up in such marvelously short order as they were that evening.

The sun was scarcely down when all was over, and the boys were on their way back from Old Marm's with Pat's prize.

It did not look like the same gun at all, and nobody need have been ashamed of being seen with that remarkable weapon over his shoulder. Long indeed, it still was, and heavy, but the good-natured gunsmith had evidently put into it the entire value of the three dollars he charged Pat for his work.

"She'll not burst with you, and that's one comfort," he had said to Pat; "and you can put in all the powder and shot you feel like. Did she kick, the other day?"

"Not a great deal, but some."

"She won't now so much. I've seamed her out clean and bright, and the lock's a good one. If you get any good out of her, come in and tell me how she carries."

"I will that. We're bound to bag something to-morrow."

"Then I'll tell you something worth while. Most people don't know it, but a heifer was in here to-day from up high Ragged Gap——"

"That's ten miles," said Sol.

"So it is, but you can get a ride on somebody's wagon, if you're wide awake. The pigeons ain't makin' a roost yet; it's too early. But they're flyin' good out nigh the Gap. Mebbe you can sight somethin' else out that way. It's an awful rugged place, and there isn't many folks ever goes there."

"Just you give us a notion of the road," exclaimed Sol Rogers, and if we don't make all Bunkerville gape when we come back!"

"You won't get in any too early, but perhaps you'll get something better than blackbirds. It's worth trying for."

The boys did very little reading of any kind after they got to their rooms, and most of their sleeping hours were spent in wild dreams of game and Ragged Gaps.

CHAPTER XIX.

IT was only the part of wisdom for Mrs. Porrance to give her boarders an early breakfast that Saturday morning. It does not take long to make and bake Johnnycake, and they—well, they had been up and dressed since before daylight, and all their preparations were more than ready.

It did not seem to Pat Nolan as if that big gun of his weighed three ounces. And then, with its new lock and sight, and all that, it was "such a beauty of a gun!" He did not envy Sol and Van a particle, with their breech-loading gimcracks of double-barrels.

"We mustn't tire ourselves out, boys," said Van, as they marched away from the house. "Old Martin said we might catch a ride."

"Wait till we turn off into the north road," said Sol; "then, if a wagon passes us, we'll go for it."

It was not right away, however, that any vehicle whatever came along, and when one did, Sol drew a long face with his first glance at the floury coat of the driver.

"It's Deacon Smith's team, and that's his man, Dan, bound for a load of buckwheat. They raise lots of it over toward the mountains. It's about the only thing 'll grow there. Hullo! he's stopping for something."

Dan, just before he reached the three pedestrians, had discovered something wrong about his harness, and not only halted, but sprang out to make corrections.

"Boys," said Van, quietly, "while I'm talking to him you both walk back and get into the wagon.

Then, stepping toward the miller's "help," with the easy manner of the complete little gentleman he was, he remarked:

"Fine morning, sir. Heard of any game out this way?"

"Mornin'. Game? Wall, no. May be a few pigeons; now 'n then a squir'l. Nothin' of much count just yit. Bime-by, arter frost, chance 'll be better."

He fussed away at a harness-buckle while he was speaking, and by the time he got it fixed to suit him he was provided with something else to speak of.

"Look a-here, you; git out o' that wagon. No foolin', now."

"Oh," said Van, "it's all right, Daniel. I told them to get in."

"You did, did ye?"

"Yes. It's ten cents apiece, you know. I'll pay for all three of us. It's all right."

"Thirty cents. Wonder what the descon 'd say? He jist hates that there ugly-mugged youngster."

But while Dan was pondering the matter Van stepped forward and sprang lightly into the wagon, taking his place on the driver's seat, with:

"Come on, Dan; we're ready."

Slowly, and as if a bit of a joke in it, all began to dawn upon him, a broad grin spread across Dan's meaty face, and he clambered back to his seat without another word, except:

"Reckon you'll den, you will."

"Of course we will," said Van. "Did you ever see a neater gun than that?"

Whatever remaining objection the miller's helper may have had disappeared in "shooting talk," and the boys were six or seven miles further on their way before Sol sang out:

"Here we are, Van. Yonder's the gap."

"It's a good five miles away."

"So it is. We're not going there. Here's the woods old Martin told of. To the westward, on the slope."

"And a consumed rough one you'll find it," said Dan. "Them deer and bar killed in them notches most every Winter. Take's no fool of a fish gettin' up there arter the first heavy snow. Noow it ain't."

"Guess it won't be very hard now, any way," said Sol, as he sprang from the wagon.

Van took out his three dimes in a very matter-of-course and business-like way, and Dan put them in his pocket with the air of a man who thought he had made that much more than he had any right to expect. So he had, very easily, too, and thirty cents was more of a sum up in that neighborhood than it would have been in the great city those dimes came from.

The boys had been saved a good long pull, however, considering what they had to carry in the way of guns and ammunition.

"There's one thing about it," said Sol, as they struck out of the road, and Dan whipped up his horses around the turn to the eastward, "I guess we won't have many more fences to climb."

"Sticktiest cornfield I've seen since I came here," said Van; "what there are come crows."

"Just out of shot. That's always the style with crows. They know all about guns and how far they 'll carry."

"Guns like yours," said Pat Nolan; "but what do they know about old revolutionary iron? Hold on, Sol."

"You'll never do it."

"Let him try 'em," said Van. "There's five of 'em together on the limb of that dead tree."

"Can't, can't," came down to their ears on the wind, as Pat braced himself and raised his long barrel.

"Bang!"

The roar of it was as loud as ever, but it did not seem to kick much, and no less than three of the black-coated gentry came fluttering to the ground.

"Hurroo! Got 'em!" shouted Pat, as he sprang forward.

"Bring 'em in," said Sol. "We must carry home all the game we get. Mrs. Porrance won't like it if we come home empty-handed."

Just then he heard a loud report behind him.

"What's that, Van?"

"Then's a spotted fox this time. I saw him peek over the brush."

"A woodchuck. What a tat one! Van, our luck's begun. It 'll be an elephant next."

A woodchuck it was, and Van's first shot with his new gun had been a good one.

"Three crows and a woodchuck," soliloquized Sol, a minute or so later. "Who says there's any danger of a famine in Bunkerville? Woodchucks are best on toast, but a crow should be eaten raw."

"Feathers and all?" said Pat.

"What's a crow without his feathers?"

"Faith, I never saw one that way. They mostly wear 'em."

"That's what gives 'em such a dark complexion," remarked Sol, as he squinted eagerly around for something on which to try his own skill.

Nothing turned up right away, and he and the others were shortly picking their way through the bushy and tangled "second-growth" at the bases of the ranges of high, bald hills, through which "Ragged Gap" gave a gateway.

They were a sort of spur of the White Mountains, and it was the general fashion to call them "mountain," although there was little about them to remind anybody of the Alps or the Andes.

Shaggy as like those of the three boys were not likely to miss many things, and there had been no hunting done in that neighborhood for a good while. So it was not long before, as Sol expressed it, he "began to make up his bag."

First came a red-eyed woodpecker. Poor fellow, he was making too much noise on a hollow tree. Then a red squirrel, whose curiosity brought him within danger. Next an unlucky yellow-hammer, and Sol said:

"I shouldn't have shot that fellow but for my regard for Mrs. Porrance. I'll tell her it's a wild duck."

He was busily putting in a fresh cartridge as he spoke, and Van sleepily motioned to Pat Nolan to look up, raised his own gun as he did so.

A moment more and they fired, almost together, Van putting in his second barrel.

Sol Rogers was a quick one.

He never looked at his friends, but his gun was up in an instant, and while a dozen or so of wild pigeons came tumbling down around him, from the effects of their shots, he was sending "right and left" after the same well scared flock.

Half as many more fluttering birds dropped here and there among the scattered trees, and Pat remarked:

"Them's the ones we wounded. Of course they flew a little."

"Pat, do you mean to insinuate that I didn't shoot 'em?"

"Did you fire, indeed? Maybe, then, you helped a bit. Nothing hurts a pigeon worse than to be shot twice."

"Now, Pat!"

"Oh," said Van, "we'll let Sol claim a pigeon or two to hang beside his woodpecker. He can tell Mrs. Porrance they're all ducks."

It is easy enough work shooting pigeons, and before long Pat knocked a gray squirrel out of a high tree.

Still, there was walking to be done and the game to carry, and so it was work as well as play, till the shadows told them it was already past noon, and their stomachs agreed entirely with the shadows.

So did Van's watch, and Sol's.

"We'll cook our own dinner," said Sol. "Hullo, there's some kind of a house. Let's go for it."

Queer place for a house, up there on the barren hillside, and a poor sort of thing it was, built of logs and with a rude stone chimney on the outside.

The nearer they came the queerer it looked, nor could they discern a sign of human occupation.

Mainly because there was none, for the house was empty.

Still, there was the fireplace when they entered, and there was a spring of cold water near the door, and there was nothing at all to prevent them from kindling a fire and broiling as many pigeons as they could eat.

Grand fun it was cooking for themselves in that lonely deserted hut.

"Who could ever have lived here?" exclaimed Sol. "There isn't so much as a cornfield or a henhouse."

"More by token," said Pat. "Mrs. Porrance says I'm to take care of her henhouse from this on."

"It's a good one, Patrick. Her hens lay all Winter, but we won't get many of the eggs, unless she puts them into corncake."

"Dog!" said Van, holding up something in his hand. "Do you see that?"

"Yes," said Sol; "what is it?"

"Slug."

"What's that?"

"It's what's left in melting metal. I know about such things. My father's got a tip-top mineral cabinet."

"No mines hereabouts."

"Can't help that——"

Just then Van darted across the one room of the log-house and picked up a piece of something white.

"Now I know. Boys, can you keep a secret?"

"Of course we can," said Pat.

"Keep a secret?" exclaimed Sol. "It's what I was made for."

"Then we'll get away from this as fast as we can, and I'll tell you what we've found."

They had eaten a very good bit of a dinner, and were nearly ready to go, so that they lost nothing by it, but the secret Van explained to them when they got back in the woods made their eyes open.

"What'll we do about it?" asked Sol.

"Doctor Betts—we'll have a talk with him," said Van.

"He's a good little fellow. I hope it won't scare him. Why, Van, it beats the hornets' nest."

"Well, then, it's getting late. I move we hunt our way down toward the road."

It was not necessary to go the way they came. A pretty clearly marked "wood road," that seemed not to have been used recently, led from the old log house down the rugged hillside.

Still, as they went along, they picked off several squirrels, red and gray, and a few more wild pigeons, to take the place of those they had eaten, and when they came out at last, not far from where they had parted with Dan and his wagon, Sol broke out with:

"We might carry our game in to Bunkerville, but not with that secret on top of it. It's too much."

"Too much astrivet," said Pat.

"Seems like an awful long trip to make," said Van, "and the sun isn't an hour high."

"We've got to do it, though," said Sol. "Oh, for a wagon and a miller's man! I say, Van, there's a horse."

"But no wagon."

"Nor harness," said Pat.

"That shows that he's nobody's horse. Van, he'd be better off if he was nearer Bunkerville."

A sorry-looking animal it was, feeding lazily along by the roadside, and offering no sort of resistance to being caught.

"What'll we do with him?" asked Pat. "We've no halter, even."

"He'll never run away. Come, now, let's load our game and guns on him and set him a-going."

"His owner might come along."

"Owner! He's too poor for that. It's only your rich ponies have owners. We're not stealing him. We're trying to drive him home, poor beast!"

The string of somewhat motley game, pigeons, woodchuck, yellow-hammer, squirrels, crows, and woodpecker were slung across the pony's thin ribs, with the guns on top and a boy on each side to steady the load, and then Sol Rogers marched ahead, holding the end of the "halter" he had rigged up with a piece of twine, and the march began.

There was not enough of spirit left in that wayside pony to make any resistance, so, of course, there was not enough to do more than the slowest kind of walking. It was a good deal after dark, therefore, before he and three tired boys halted in the outskirts of Bunkerville.

"It would be stealing to take him any further," said Sol.

"How so?" asked Van.

"Why, we found him by the side of the road, out of town. That's just where we'll leave him. He's used to taking care of himself."

"We ought to feed him," said Pat. "Sure an' he's worked for us."

"Exactly," said Sol. "We're just at the back side of Deacon Smith's big pasture lot now. There's the bars. Plenty of good grass and water. Deacon Smith's a good man. I'm glad to give him a chance to help the poor."

"It's as poor a pony as I ever saw," said Van.

"Then let down the bars, Patrick. Eat all you can, pony, my boy. Smith'll be never miss it. Now, boys, for Mrs. Porrance and some supper."

The pony certainly could have had no objection to the quarters assigned him, and the bars were carefully put up behind him.

"The deacon'll wonder how he did that same," said Pat.

"Patrick," exclaimed Sol, "do you suppose a good man like Deacon Smith'd grudge a little grass and water to a fellow-creature?"

CHAPTER XX.

MRS. PORRANCE had expected a somewhat late return of her young boarders from their day's hunt, and so had not wasted any considerable time or thought in "waiting" for them.

That was why neither she nor Almira was at the dining-room window when they came through the front gate, and Sol had a chance to say:

"There's my pigeons, Van. Give me the woodchuck. Pat, Give me the crows. You've most of the squirrels, Van. Hide 'em there by the window. Now let's go in."

Van plumped the birds down by the window and then said, as they entered:

"I'll take your gun up-stairs, Sol, while you carry the game in. I'll be right down."

That was kind of Van, and he and Pat were back in the dining-room by the time Mrs. Porrance had heard Sol's first account of the day's doings in Ragged Gap, and was beginning to comment on the game.

"A gray squirrel. Only one!"

"Such a remarkably tat and handsome squirrel," said Sol. "Look at his tail."

"We'll cook that for you. Three red ones——"

"Reddest kind," said Sol.

"One yellow-hammer. What's that good for?"

"It's a rare bird," said Sol.

"And that's a woodchuck! Why, Sol Rogers, a woodchuck! And what tor did you bring home those crows? A pretty Sunday dinner you've laid out. Crows!"

"Crows, indeed!" exclaimed Almira. "Common black crows."

"Do you really mean to say they are crows?" asked Van, as he came in. "Now, Sol has been insisting on it they were pigeons, all the way home. I told him he was wrong."

"And he's crows they are, are they!" inquired Pat Nolan, with a queer look on his face; but just as Mrs. Porrance began again with, "Sol Rogers," that young worthy sprang away and out of the front door, to where the real "game" of the day had been deposited.

In a moment more a sort of angry whoop came ringing through the windows, and Sol rushed back, exclaiming:

"They're gone! Boys, they're gone! Somebody's stolen 'em. What'll we do?"

"Gone! What are gone?" calmly responded Van Rivington.

"What are gone? Why, all our pigeons and all the rest of our squirrels."

"Pigeons! What do you mean? And what squirrels are you speaking of?"

"Why, all we brought home. All we left out there under the window."

"Nonsense," said Pat Nolan. "I'll be after bringin' in a load of wood. Will supper be ready this? It's hungry I am."

"Sol Rogers," almost angrily exclaimed Mrs. Porrance, "do you think you can deceive me?"

"Van," shouted Sol, "what have you done with them?"

"On my word and honor I've not been out of the house since I came in. I can't imagine what you're up to."

Sol can't tell the truth if he tries," remarked Miss Almira. "He can eat his woodchuck and his crows, for all of me."

"Sol," said Van, "this beats the spotted fox. Why can't you come right out with it and tell Mrs. Porrance just what luck we had?"

But Sol Rogers was not an easy bird to catch, and the allusion to the spotted fox gave him hint enough.

"Then I will," he said, with surprising coolness. "I've had a grand, good time, Mrs. Porrance. We shot some pigeons, too, and we ate them for dinner. Cooked them ourselves."

Even Mrs. Porrance saw there was something going on among them, but just then Pat came in again, pretty heavily laden, and not with wood.

"Mrs. Porrance," he said, excitedly, "and where did you get all these? Oh, but she's the fine ones! What would you give for the like o' them, Sol?"

"Those?" gravely remarked Mrs. Porrance. "Some fellows from the mountains brought them in. Fellows that know how to shoot."

"No crows there," said Van.

"Nor woodchucks," said Pat.

"Mrs. Porrance," gasped Sol, "I give in. I only hope those fellows from the mountains told you the truth, as I always do. If you won't say anything more about it I'll eat the woodchuck, if Miss Almira 'll cook him. Van can have the crows and Pat the woodpecker. Is supper ready?"

It was, and while they were eating it the story of their day's adventures came rapidly out, all except the secret of the log-house on the hillside.

"You must have eaten a good many pigeons for your dinner, from your own account," said Mrs. Porrance, at last. "You'd better have brought some home with you."

"How could we?" asked Sol. "It's a terrible long walk. All these crows to carry, too."

"Indeed," exclaimed Almira, "I don't see how they did it."

"You'll have to ask Van. He did it with his little hatchet. He and George Washington and I always tell the truth. That is, about pigeons."

"Van, Mr. Rivington," said Almira, "how did you do it?"

"Horseback to the town line. Boyback to the front gate."

"But how did they get into the house?"

"One boy at the window with a fish line. Another boy down there to hitch 'em on. Another boy in the house telling yarns. Sol's a very good little fellow."

"So I am," said Sol. "Mrs. Porrance thinks a great deal of me."

"Anyhow," remarked that lady, "I'm glad of something besides crows and woodpeckers."

It was after supper that Sol said to Van:

"When do you mean to see Doctor Betts about your discovery?"

"No hurry. It's a secret we can keep for a while. Seems to me I can go to bed as well as anything else I know how to do, about these days."

And that very night, while they were sleeping, a couple of roughly dressed men, in a one-horse wagon, drove watchfully along the road toward the Gap and turned into the woods by the path the boys had come out of.

The next day the old log-house was occupied, and after that it soon became known in the village that "the charcoal-burners had come back to try it on again."

And there was more than one man who said to his neighbor:

"I don't see how on earth they manage to make charcoal-burning and pigeon-trapping pay. But, then, that's their lookout, not mine."

It was the noblest kind of a pigeon pie the boys had for their Sunday dinner, and they had an abundance of corn-bread with it.

CHAPTER XXI.

THERE is every likelihood that Mrs. Porrance gave a certain part of her "game" away to somebody, for it never made its appearance on the dinner-table, and even Sol Rogers gave up inquiring about it before the week was over.

One thing was always there and at every meal, in some form or other, and it seemed to the boys as if each succeeding day brought with it less and less of other varieties of food.

Not but what there was a variety.

Mrs. Porrance beat any living cook-book in the number of styles she had for doing up corn-meal.

It was all in vain that her boarders systematically cleaned the table of all things excepting corn, for to that they were compelled to come, and she was sure to tell them how nice it was, in a tone and manner which did not admit of dispute.

"We've done our best, boys," said Van, as they were gathered in his and Sol's room one evening, toward the end of the week. "We've eaten all we could, but the meal-bag beats us."

"I told you how it would be," said Sol, "and this is only a beginning. She doesn't kill her pigs till November, and it's scarcely the middle of October now."

"What of that?" asked Pat.

"No fresh meat of any consequence till then."

"No pies or anything?"

"Apple pies, perhaps. But apples didn't do very well this year, and if the price is up there won't be many apples for us."

"You ought to take a look at the henroop. The chickens are fine."

"That's what we'll do, then," quietly remarked Sol. "We'll look at 'em."

"That won't hurt 'em," said Van. "I like to look at chickens, even if I can't eat 'em."

"Then, when you've done that," exclaimed Pat, "come around to the barn and look at the corn-bin. I'm in for some more shelling."

"We're only getting skim milk with it now," added Sol.

"That's because the cows are falling off a little and better be up."

"That's it, is it? Well, we must think a good deal about it. But there's one thing more to think of."

"What's that, Sol?" asked Van.

"The boys are getting down on us."

"How's that?"

"Oh, we've boxed and fenced and read mornings and evenings; we've hunted and fished Saturdays; we've scarcely shown ourselves on the green. Bob and Joe Hinckley have put 'em up to it, and they

call us coddish, say we don't want to mix with the rest, and all that sort of thing."

"Then we must go in," said Van. "We'll show 'em."

"There'll be some kind of music if we do, then."

"All right, Pat, do you feel much like a coddish?"

"Deed and I do, then. Saltish, kind. Not fit to be eaten. I'm in if there's fun a-coming."

Sol's keen eyes and ears had not been mistaken in the signs of unpopularity that were beginning to show themselves.

Bob and Joe were doing their best, and waiting a good chance to get even, as they called it, but they had not said anything to other people about the yellow-jacket business. That is, except to insinuate that somehow or other Sol Rogers and his friends were at the bottom of it.

That was the reason that, for two successive evenings, after school hours, Sol and Van lingered on the green all in vain. There seemed no chance for them to get in with the rest.

Nobody chose them on either side at baseball or football, more than if they had been a pair of strangers.

"To-morrow morning we'll try 'em again," said Van, and at supper-time, when Mrs. Porrance said something about their next day's sport, and asked them if they meant to fish or to hunt, Sol replied:

"No, Mrs. Porrance; we've some important business to-morrow. The morals of Bunkerville require our attention."

"The morals of Bunkerville!" exclaimed Almira. "What do you mean?"

"Too many heathens. Reading the *Clarion* doesn't seem to do 'em any good. We must try our hands at it, Miss Almira."

Little more was to be gotten out of him, but even Pat Nolan managed to be among the gathering crowd of village boys and students on the green, after next morning's breakfast. Bob and Joe were there, of course, and everybody knew there was to be a grand game of baseball between the academy and the "village."

"Sure we'll not be counted in on that same," said Pat to Van, a little too loudly.

"Counted in!" exclaimed a sneering voice near him. "What do you know about ball?"

"Never mind that, Pat," said Van. "That's only Bob Hinkley, the hornet-hunter."

"Did you say anything about hornets? How are you off for codfish? I say, Joe, here's the three young aristocrats from the city. Call the boys."

"Van," remarked Sol, "they're a-coming. We're in for it."

"You mean they are."

"Look at 'em," said Pat, in a sorrowful voice. "The poor young creatures."

"Do you mean me?" roared Bob.

"That's one of 'em, Van," said Pat.

"One of who, you Paddy? Take that for your sass!"

Pat dodged the core of Bob's apple that buzzed by his head, but it struck another fellow squarely in the mouth, and that other fellow was one of Bob's crowd.

"It was Paddy's fault. Hit him."

"Did you throw that at me?"

"Deed and I didn't," said Pat, with a grin, "but I never saw an apple core knew better where to go. Did it do yez any good?"

Things were beginning to wear a troublesome aspect, but the plucky bearing of the three friends was a good deal of a puzzle to their would-be tormentors. The crowd gathered fast, however, as crowds will, especially crowds of boys, and when Bob Hinkley suddenly exclaimed, "Now, boys, hustle 'em," there was but scanty room to hustle in.

Perhaps that was the reason the crisis came so soon.

Joe Hinckley made a sort of a charging shove at Van Rivington, and somehow never touched him.

His push carried him by, however, and he scarcely knew what it was that tangled his feet as he went.

Anyhow, down he came, and by the time he was up again, flushed and angry, there was a hurly-burly all around him.

"Back to back!" shouted Van.

There had never before been anything like discipline or army tactics shown in any skirmish on the Bunkerville green, but the value of such things came out in a twinkling.

Three strong, active boys, fresh from daily practice with their boxing-gloves, fronting every way and hitting out remorselessly at every corner, made a pretty tough knot to break.

It seemed as if any assailant who rushed or struck at one of those three was dead sure to be "plumped" by another of them, while the man he was after stood on his guard.

If the Hinckley crowd had also been trained and well ordered, so as to have gone in all at once, the result might have been different, for there were nearly a dozen of them, besides the miscellaneous mass who preferred to look on.

"I'll separate 'em," shouted a big, hulking fellow, nearly six feet high, as he pushed to the front. "I'll teach 'em what's what!"

"It's the deacon's son," said Sol, "and his name it is Smith, and his father he is a miller."

"Now, boys!" shouted Van, as he faced his big antagonist, squaring off and "dancing" forward.

If the miller's son got it hard from Sol's toe on one shin, Pat's was as hard to bear on the other, and Van's fist came up under his right arm, at the fleshy part, near the shoulder, with a force that felt as if the arm was coming out of the socket. The other arm followed as he made a grab at his shins.

Then there was the deep dent of a bootheel just above his left knee.

No harm done; but a big, clumsy lubber so completely used up that it was no trick at all to trip and roll him over, upsetting Bob Hinckley and two others on top of him.

As for Joe, he had foolishly attempted to take Van in the rear, and was just then holding his nose with one hand and the side of his head with the other.

"One, two, three," sang Sol. "Van, you did that lovely."

"Boys! what does all this mean?"

"Back to back," said Van. "No dodging. It's Doctor Betts."

"What does this mean?" again roared the unexpected intruder.

"We're giving a bit of a boxing lesson, doctor," replied Sol.

"With tactics thrown in," added Van. "I'm playing Xenophon. Sol is Julius Cæsar, and Pat's Napoleon Bonaparte."

"You've certainly held your own," growled the doctor, as his huge form towered closer and closer to the combatants. "The rules of the academy forbid fighting——"

"Fighting, doctor?" exclaimed Sol. "They may be fighting, but we're not. It's just healthy exercise. Not a soul of 'em has hit us once. They don't parry well, that's all. The poor fellows 'll learn."

Dr. Betts kept his face straight as he could while he looked around at the noses and eyes of the boys who did not know how to parry, and at the miller's son, rubbing himself on the grass.

"I must look into this matter. You three will come to my study at two o'clock this afternoon. Robert, Joseph, I'll see you at once. Bring your friends——"

And he named half a dozen whose appearance told tales of them on the spot. There was no such thing as getting away from it.

Then, with a tremendous frown on his face, the academy principal stalked solemnly away, muttering to himself:

"Splendid. To think of those three youngsters handling a crowd like that. Somebody must be punished for it. Most of 'em seem to have got enough as it is. I must lecture those three. I guess young Rivington was captain. Sol Rogers is bright enough, but he never could have done that."

The doctor was right about Van. He had not Sol's ready tongue, to be sure, but he was a born "captain." Scarcely was the excitement allowed to lull before he shouted:

"Hurrah, boys! Now for the game. Sol, who'll we pick for our nine?"

THREE BOYS.—"THE STRING OF SOMEWHAT MOTLEY GAME WAS SLUNG ACROSS THE PONY'S THIN RIBS, WITH THE GUNS ON TOP AND A BOY ON EACH SIDE TO STEADY THE LOAD, AND THEN SOL ROGERS MARCHED AHEAD, HOLDING THE END OF THE 'HALTER.'"—SEE PAGE 230.

That would have been Bob Hinckley's business, under other circumstances, but he was just then sulking by the fence with Smith and Joe.

Sol knew well enough the capacities of the players, and not a boy whose name he called out but was in a hurry to make one of that "nine."

The three friends had knocked their way into a sudden popularity that was almost oppressive. Indeed, their village opponents, already picked out and used to playing together, set at work in an unsteady and nervous sort of way that sent them away behind before they got well warmed up to it.

The general puzzle was:

"Sol Rogers always was a pretty good pitcher and batter, but how did those two city chaps ever learn baseball? They never have any chance for outdoor exercise."

That's a very common notion with country boys, and sometimes there is too much truth in it, but not always, by any means.

At all events, the academy won that game, with a score that set the villagers to practicing the next week for dear life.

And all through the game the crowd of spectators grew and grew, for word had gone around the village that Doctor Betts had broken up a riot on the green, and some of the boys had been pounded half to death.

And Mrs. Porrance and Almira heard accounts of it which led them to expect a queer-looking lot of faces when their boarders came home to dinner.

[To be continued.]

"Three Boys" was commenced in No. 612.

Distinguished Scholars of Jersey City (N. J.) Schools.

AUGUSTUS H. VAN WINKLE,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 11, BERGEN SQUARE, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

AUGUSTUS H. VAN WINKLE is a very promising pupil of Grammar School No. 11, Bergen Square, Jersey City, N. J. He was born in that city, December 3d, 1864, making him fourteen years of age. He is the son of John and Malinda Van Winkle. At the age of about ten years he entered the lowest primary class of his present school, and he is now in the first division of the first class. He skipped one class in the primary department. It is pleasant to trace his record from class to class and from department to department. He is a well-remembered pupil in every class in which he has studied, and there is not a single cloud upon him from the first hour in the school up to the present day. He is an amiable and intelligent boy. His manners are respectful to his elders, and with those of his own age he is so frank and good-hearted that he is extremely popular. He is always interested in his studies and in everything which can make him intelligent and manly. The kind-hearted and efficient Principal of this school, Mr. Ward, has many methods of his own by which he encourages the ambition of his pupils, and he finds great satisfaction in the zeal which is always to be observed in young Van Winkle.

AUGUSTUS H. VAN WINKLE, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 11, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

MAGGIE J. HEWITT.

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 12, CRESCENT AVENUE, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

MAGGIE J. HEWITT is a pupil of the first grammar class of Grammar School No. 12, Crescent Avenue, Jersey City, N. J., who can claim the high honor of making one hundred per cent. She was born in Jersey City, N. J., January 1st, 1865, and is therefore fourteen years of age. She is the daughter of Michael and Margaret Hewitt. When five years old she became a pupil in the primary department of No. 12, where she completed the lower studies. After this she attended the school of the Catholic Sisters for some time, and then entered the third grammar class of No 12. At all times she has been a diligent and improving pupil, and in the higher studies she has given the best possible evidence of a comprehensive understanding. She is now making a per centage which only the studious can obtain. In her case it is also to be remarked that she is not merely committing certain lessons to memory from day to day, but she is showing a marked mental originality of her own. She is a graceful, modest girl, with a symmetrical head and interesting face. She offers in her character and conduct a most gratifying example to the young of her sex. Intelligent, truthful and sincere, she adds to these an amiability which makes her companionship as delightful as it is otherwise profitable.

MAGGIE J. HEWITT, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 12, CRESCENT AVENUE, JERSEY CITY.

A LARGE aerolite fell in Chicago on Wednesday night, April 9th. It exploded with a report like that of a cannon, and did a great deal of mischief. The meteor looked the size of a child's hoop, or some thirty inches in diameter. Two bushels of fragments were found after the explosion. No one was hurt, but the electric fluid set fire to a building and did some hundreds of dollars' worth of damage. It also entered the library of Colonel Nutt and played many eccentric pranks there. It destroyed a telephone, dashed the globes off chandeliers, burst a gas meter, and blew out all the window panes on the floor. Three minutes before the accident Colonel Nutt and his wife were talking through the telephone to a friend at some distance. Had they continued in contact with the instrument their death would have been almost certain. Pieces of the aerolite are described by the local newspapers as being like clinker or slag, dark outside, but almost white at the centre. It is a very rare and notable thing that a meteor should fall and lightning strike at the same moment and the same place. Sailors, indeed, generally feel safe from lightning when they see "fire balls" or boldes either at the yardarm or close by elsewhere."

A CURIOUS PUZZLE.

HERE is something to scratch your head over. A very curious number is 142,857, which multiplied by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, gives the same figures in the same order, beginning at a point, but if multiplied by 7 gives all nines:

142,857x1—142,857
142,857x2—285,714
142,857x3—428,571
142,857x4—571,428
142,857x5—714,285
142,857x6—647,142
142,857x7—999,999

Multiply 142,857 by 8, and you have 1,142,856. Then add the first figure to the last and you have 142,857, the original number the same as the start.

OVER THE CATARACT.

SINCE the death penalty was abolished in Wisconsin the amusements offered to the public have been "stale, flat and unprofitable." The high-toned moral status of some could only be aroused and satisfied with an entertainment which could furnish at least a rope and a death. Hence, when it was announced that W. B. Linscott would walk across the falls at Wausau on a single line, there were men who said they would give twenty-five cents to see him walk across, but would give five dollars to see him fall in; others freely uttered the prediction that the whole thing was a sell, and when this stranger had collected a few dollars he would "light out," and no attempt would be made to perform the perilous feat.

As the hour for the performance drew near, the people began to gather in vast numbers, lining the banks of the river on each side. The rope had been stretched across the river about midway between the bridge and the brink of the falls. The wind, which had begun to blow in the morning, had in-

creased to a gale, which came in fitful gusts, causing the rope to vibrate and tremble so much that Linscott's friends were free to admit that, while they believed in his inability to perform just what he had advertised, they did not think it possible in such a windstorm, blowing as it was directly across the frail bridge upon which he was to crown the rapids.

From the dam above the bridge to the brink of the falls is a rapid, where the vast volume of water, swollen by the Spring freshet, rushes forward in long breakers, foaming and leaping in fantastic shapes to the cataract, where it takes the grand plunge, to hurry forward through the rapids below, bounding into great waves, whirlpools and eddies, until it reaches the level stream below. We do not believe that more than one man in ten thousand could pass through those falls and come out alive.

As the finger of the dial marked the hour set for Linscott's journey he stepped upon the rope, dressed in the style of acrobats. His balance-pole in hand, he walked forward upon the slender thread, and in spite of the howling winds around him and the dark waves below, which sent up their old cheers as if to invite him to their deadly embrace, walked steadily forward to a point about three hundred feet from the west shore, and about one hundred and fifty from the east shore, when a gust of wind more powerful than ever struck the brave man and threw him off his balance; his pole, with which he attempted to regain his balance, came up to nearly a perpendicular, when the lower end was caught by the crest of a giant wave below and wrenched from his hand.

Linscott fell, and was swallowed up by the mad waves below, to reappear at the brink of the falls, over which he plunged. Quickly emerging amid the breakers below the falls, his stalwart form was seen battling with the icy waters for his life. By almost superhuman efforts he gained the shore near the lower end of the Clarkes' lumber-yard, and by the assistance of those who had gathered there he soon stood upon the dry land, to wave his hand to to the vast concourse of people, whose glad cheers proclaimed him the hero of the hour.

WANDERING WILLIE.—"BIRDIE WAS STILL IN THE GRASP OF THE EXECUTIONER, WHO HELD HER FIRMLY, LOOKING THE WHILE AT BENGUELA, PROBABLY WAITING FOR ORDERS."

WANDERING WILLIE;

Or,

Lost in the Bush.

The Adventures of a Missionary's Son in the Wilds of Africa.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BOILING SPRING.

NO sooner was the magician out of the apartment than Birdie turned her attention to King Sankorra.

Placing about ten grains of quinine on a leaf, she told him to put out his tongue, on which she dropped the medicine.

"Swallow it quickly," she exclaimed.

The king did so, and immediately fancied that it was something of a deleterious nature, on account of its intense bitterness.

"Water, water!" he cried, making the most hideous grimaces.

The attendant slaves instantly handed him a gourd containing water, which he drank eagerly.

Bestowing his attention on Birdie, he exclaimed:

"What is this you have given me?"

"A preparation of the bark of a tree," she replied

"If you have poisoned me you will surely die."

Birdie smiled, and taking the packet of quinine from her pocket again, she put some in her own mouth.

"See!" she replied, "I am not afraid of it. It is always good to take in a fever-stricken, malarial climate like this."

"Will it cure me?" Sankorra asked, feeling reassured.

"Perhaps you will require some more before you get entirely well."

"Give me more. I want to get well. I am satisfied."

"Not yet; to-morrow you shall have more."

At this juncture Benguela entered again.

He had given orders for the execution of the slaves, and had sent word into the City of Kasonga that a public sacrifice would be made to propitiate the demons who were supposed to have bewitched the king.

The news rapidly spread.

People left off what ever business they were engaged in and went to the large square, or plaza, to await the sacrifice.

In fact, they made a general holiday affair of it. Drums were beaten, and much pombi and palm-wine consumed.

Benguela was accompanied by two singular-looking creatures.

They were dressed in a suit of network of native manufacture, covering every part of the body except the head, over which they wore a carved and painted mask.

The net suit was striped horizontally with black and white, the gloves and feet-pieces being laced to the sleeves and legs, and the join between the body and drawers being concealed by a covering of grass.

The mask was painted so as to resemble an old man's face with enormous spectacles, and some gray fur covered the back part.

In one hand they held a long staff, and in the other a bell, which they constantly jingled.

These men were of great importance to the magicians, who called them "sham devils."

Their functions were to frighten away the devils who haunted the woods and lonely places.

These wood devils are reported to be both numerous and powerful in Kasonga. Each possesses his own peculiar district, and is much feared by the superstitious natives.

They are supposed to be very jealous of each other, and to hate any intrusion on their particular domains.

Sham devils are thought to so closely resemble real devils that by showing themselves in their reported haunts they make the latter move away to some other locality.

In consequence, the sham devils are well paid by the inhabitants, and being also the Fetishman, or magician of the tribe, they enjoy a comfortable income, and have an easy time of it generally.

Benguela's sharp eyes noticed a change in the king's face, and he at once divined that something had happened during his brief absence.

"What have you been giving the king?" he asked Birdie.

"Medicine," she replied.

"Of what kind?"

"A white powder, which is of a vegetable nature. You would not be any wiser if I told you its name."

"Give it me."

"I certainly shall not," she replied.

Benguela glared angrily at her.

"We shall see;" he exclaimed.

He quitted the room, and the king, who was in reality very weak, fell into a doze.

Birdie went to a window and looked out on the curiously-shaped huts that formed the city of Kasonga.

While she was thus occupied Benguela returned, having with him the executioner attached to the king's palace, whose occupation it was to cut off the heads of slaves who incurred his majesty's displeasure, and strangle such of the king's wives who were quarrelsome and disobedient.

"Search him!" said the magician, pointing to Birdie.

The burly black caught her in a vigorous grasp, and speedily extracted the quinine from the pocket in which she kept it.

He handed it to Benguela, who skillfully changed the quinine for another powder of a similar color, which he held concealed in his hand.

This was a dose of arsenic, strong enough to kill an ox.

"Oh, king," he exclaimed, pretending to examine the powder, "it is fortunate that the white slave did not give you more of this."

"What do you say?" asked the king, rousing himself and sitting up.

"My devils have told me that you were being poisoned."

At this declaration the weak-minded king shivered with a nervous terror.

He could not refuse to believe anything that the sham devils said, and he imagined that Birdie was trying to kill him.

"How can you prove it?" he asked.

"Easily enough," replied Benguela. "The poison you have taken was not enough to kill you, but a few more doses would have done it. I have taken from the white slave enough of the drug to show what it is. Some one must eat it."

Birdie saw her danger if Benguela prevailed in persuading the king that she was a poisoner.

Advancing boldly, she held out her hand and exclaimed:

"Give it me; I will eat it."

"No; you are reserved for another fate," replied Benguela.

The king sat up on the bed and looked first at one, then at the other, with a puzzled expression.

"You, oh, Benguela!" he exclaimed, "say the drug is poison?"

"Do not believe him," said Birdie.

"What am I to think?"

"Do you not feel a pain?" asked Benguela.

"Yes, I am suffering fearful torture. Oh, if I have been poisoned I will have a terrible revenge!"

At this moment Sankorra's musicians, accompanied by his favorite dwarf, entered the apartment.

It was their custom to entertain the king in the afternoon, and they had come for that purpose.

The dwarf, whose name was Mangoema, was a privileged person, and allowed to play any tricks he thought would amuse the king.

He carried a rattle, and shaking it, danced round the room, shouting his master's name in this style:

"Ohi, Sankorra! Ohi, ohi!"

He had a cast in one eye, was lame in the left leg, and had a mouth extending from ear to ear, which made him anything but an attractive object.

The musicians played on an instrument called the "marimba," which was formed of two rows of gourds of different sizes, fitted into a framework.

Over each pair of gourds was a clef made of hard wood, which gave a metallic sound when struck with sticks having india-rubber heads.

Of these sticks there were different sizes, the player dexterously changing one for the other, as a sharper or duller sound was required.

Mangoema saw the powder in the head magician's hand, and thought he would make the king laugh by snatching it away.

This he did.

"Put it back!" cried the king.

"Oh, no," cried the dwarf, "I like sugar. Sweets always go to the sweet."

So saying he swallowed the whole of the poison, and striking the magician with his rattle, laughed loudly.

"I was too quick for you that time, uncle!" he exclaimed.

"So much the worse for you," replied Benguela.

"Sankorra won't let you beat me."

He ran like a child in disgrace to the king's couch, and kneeling down, kissed his hand.

"You will protect Mongoema," he said, plaintively. "Sankorra loves the poor dwarf who makes him laugh."

"Alas! you do not know what you have done," replied the king.

"Nothing. I only took the sugar from the Fetishman."

"It was not sugar."

"What, then?"

"Poison, so Benguela asserts," answered the king.

At this announcement the dwarf shuddered convulsively.

"Then I shall die!" he exclaimed.

"Undoubtedly, if Benguela is correct; but there is yet hope. The white slave says it is a harmless drug."

Mangoema sat down on the ground, his face blanched with terror, and apparently unable to move.

He was paralyzed with fear.

The musicians stopped playing and crouched down in a corner with their marimbas on their knees, as if they dreaded lest they should incur the anger of the king.

Birdie was still in the grasp of the executioner, who held her firmly, looking the while at Benguela, probably waiting for orders.

The king took the dwarf's hand in his and tried to soothe him, for he was much attached to the little fellow.

The only one unconcerned was Birdie, who did not expect any ill effect from the quinine.

She was unaware of the change the magicians had made in the powders.

OVER THE CATARACT.—A ROPE-WALKER'S ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE WISCONSIN RIVER FALLS AT WAUSAU, ON A TIGHT ROPE.

Twenty minutes elapsed.

Then Mangoema sprang up, and placing his hand to his stomach uttered an awful cry.

"I am on fire," he said. "This is death. I feel it."

Throwing himself on the floor, he writhed about in uncontrollable agony.

A purple froth stained his lips, which he bit until the blood came.

His features were distorted; his tongue, black and swollen, lolled out of his mouth; his eyes protruded from their sockets; and all the time groans, curses and wild exclamations, like the cry of a beast in pain, escaped him.

His hands clutched convulsively at his stomach, which he tried to tear open.

The suffering he underwent was indescribable.

This lasted for a half hour, when death put an end to his lingering agony.

He fell on his back, an object of horror and loathing, from which all turned away, Birdie being so much overcome that she sank on her knees and prayed aloud.

The king, addressing Benguela, said:

"The white slave must die. Take her. I withdraw my protection. She is yours."

At this announcement Birdie crawled toward the king. Going as far as the grip of the executioner would permit, and holding up her clasped hands in a supplicating manner, she exclaimed:

"Indeed I am not guilty. The powder I had was harmless."

The king pointed to the dead body of the dwarf.

"That bad man, who pretends that he is a magician," continued Birdie, "must have changed the powders."

Benguela frowned darkly.

"Away with him!" he said to the executioner.

"Shall he die with the others at the sacrifice?" the latter inquired.

"No. Secure him. To-morrow we will boil him alive in the sacred spring."

Birdie abandoned herself to her fate.

With a smile of resignation worthy of a Christian martyr of old time she suffered herself to be rudely dragged away

Benguela had triumphed.

There was a hut in the courtyard of the palace which was used as a prison, and into it she was roughly pushed.

The door closed upon her, she sank upon a mat, and, overcome with fatigue, worn out with excitement, she burst into tears.

A feeling of blank resignation akin to despair filled her heart; but after a time this passed away, and the faith which always animates the breast of a Christian came to cheer and sustain her.

Desperate as her situation was, she believed that heaven would yet come to her assistance.

She had often heard of the boiling wells of some parts of Africa.

To be bound and cast into one of these natural hot springs would be a terrible death.

The cruelty of Benguela's nature was well illustrated in the kind of punishment he had selected for her.

Just before dusk a slave brought her some rice and water, which she ate and drank.

After this she prayed earnestly for some time, not forgetting to mention Willie in her prayers; and went to sleep.

Meanwhile the King felt much better. No disastrous result, such as he had expected, followed the taking of the powder, and, though the dwarf was dead, he felt that he had been hasty in delivering Birdie to the tender mercies of the magician.

That night he had a dream about his imprisoned wife.

He thought Queen Taborah appeared to him in a vision and besought him to pardon her, as she was about to become a mother.

Scarcely had he recovered from the effect this dream had on his mind than he thought he put his hand on a black snake, which stung him, and on looking at the head of the serpent he saw that it had the face of Benguela.

He was in danger of dying, when a little gazelle came and licked the wound, which instantly healed up, and, strange to say, the gazelle had the pretty, innocent features of Birdie.

Those dreams had a great effect on the king, who, when he woke up, could not go to sleep again.

He was very superstitious, and, being a believer in dreams, began to entertain a dread of Benguela.

In fact, he had never liked the magician, but he had always been afraid of his influence over the evil spirits.

He wanted to save Birdie from the horrible death in store for her, yet he did not know how to proceed.

Being unable to sleep, the king got up. His costume was of such a primitive nature that it did not take him long to dress.

His subjects only wore a cloth round their waist, but Sankorra always used a little more cloth, and on grand occasions put on the blue coat of an American soldier, which some enterprising dealer in ivory had sold him.

He went to a house which was the headquarters of the Fetishmen or magicians.

Here lived Benguela with his satellites, and here was a Joss-house, in which were several wooden idols.

Going into the Joss-house, the king prostrated himself before the most hideous of the idols, and muttered a species of invocation.

While he was thus engaged Benguela came in.

The wily magician had heard of Sankorra's coming from the spies he had always around him.

It was a part of his practice never to be ignorant of the king's movements.

"Oh, king," he said, "it is right that you should return thanks, for your health is improved."

Sankorra rose.

"The medicine that the Christian gave me has not hurt me," he replied.

"But it killed the dwarf."

"True. How is it, then, that I am unharmed?"

"My charms have proved efficacious. You had a devil in you that I chased out. You are a little weak still, but I have been told by the invisible spirits that you will soon be well."

"May the spirits grant it!"

"They will grant all you wish if you will do as they desire."

"Name their wishes," said Sankorra.

"Firstly, you must have nothing to do with Christians. Had I not used the highest Fetishes yesterday, the poison would have killed you, for these Christians only wish to poison you to take your country from you."

"Can that be true?"

"Are they not already settled on the coast? The spirits say that unless we fight the Christians they will some day take all Africa, and our children will be their slaves."

"That must never be."

"Secondly, the white slave must die to-day."

"It is already decreed," said the king.

"Thirdly, you must bury your wife alive," exclaimed Benguela.

The king shook his head sadly.

"That I cannot do," he answered. "Of all my wives, she is the one I love. The others interest me no more."

"The spirits wish you to marry another."

"Who is she?"

Benguela was at a loss what to say in reply to this direct question.

"I will ask," he answered.

Going to the chief idol, he pretended to question it.

"What is the answer?" asked Sankorra.

"Your next wife is coming from across the sea," said the magician.

"Then she is white?"

"Yes, oh, king."

"Will she be here soon?"

"I cannot say."

Benguela thought that it was perfectly safe to tell the weak-minded king that his next wife was to be a white woman, who would come from over the sea.

It was a prediction not at all likely to be verified.

He did not know, however, how this random prophecy was destined to disconcert his schemes.

"Do you not wish to get well soon?" continued he.

"Did a sick man ever wish to remain in bed, weak and helpless?" replied the king.

"No; that is not natural. What I have to say is this: Do not offend the spirits. They wish your wife to die because she is a Christian."

"Give me time to think of it."

"Take your time, but remember what I have said," exclaimed Benguela, with a warning motion of the hand.

"I will. You have ever found me obedient to the will of the spirits."

The magician announced that he had.

Then he advanced to an altar, on which stood a cup made of earthenware.

This was placed there as a libation or offering to the idols by some admirer.

It contained goat's milk, eggs and palm-wine.

Handing it to the king he said:

"Drink. You have deserved well of the invisible spirits, and they wish you to drink what was intended for them."

This was a great honor.

It was not often that Benguela favored the king so highly, and the latter drank the nourishing and by no means unpleasant mixture with a proud feeling of elation.

Returning the cup empty, he said:

"There is something miraculous in that. It seems to course through my veins like liquid fire."

"Good, oh king!" replied Benguela. "The spirits have blessed it for your use. Let us go now to the boiling well."

The king Sankorra started.

For the once he had forgotten all about Birdie, though her sweet face had been haunting him all night, even in his dreams.

"The sacrifice!" he ejaculated.

"Yes; the white slave dies to-day."

"And must he die?"

Benguela dashed the earthen cup on the floor angrily.

"You are already inclined to be a Christian," he cried.

"Indeed I am not."

"Your actions betray it."

"It is a mistake. I uphold our religion and worship the good spirits. Let the white slave die," replied Sankorra, who was alarmed at the vehemence of the magician.

"Come, then; it is proper that you should witness so holy a sacrifice lasting," answered Benguela.

The king, who was still weak and emaciated, leant on the arm of the magician, and together they quitted the Joss-house.

His obedience to Benguela may seem exaggerated, but religion with these people is simply the densest ignorance and the worst kind of superstition.

It is a mixture of idolatry and Fetishism.

All villages have devil-huts and idols, before which offerings of pombi, grain and meat are placed, and nearly every man wears a small figure round his neck or arm.

Many magicians also move about with idols, which they pretend to consult for the benefit of their clients, and some, being clever ventriloquists, manage to drive a flourishing business.

The great centre of the Kasonga religion, however, is an idol named Kingwe a Banza, which is supposed to represent the founders of Sankorra's family, and to be all-powerful for good or evil.

The idol is kept in a hut situated in a clearing amidst dense jungle.

Around the jungle live a number of priests, who guard the sacred grove from profane intruders and receive offerings for the idol, and also a large portion of the tributes paid to Sankorra by traders passing through his territory.

But although they hold this official position they are not allowed to set eyes upon the idol itself, that privilege being reserved for the reigning sovereign and the chief magician, who consult it on momentous occasions.

The king makes offerings to it on his accession to the throne, and after gaining any great victory over his adversaries.

Thus it follows that only Sankorra and Benguela were privileged to see the idol called Kingwe a Banza.

Going into the courtyard a litter was in waiting for the king.

He lay down upon it and it was lifted up by six bearers, while two men with fans placed themselves one on each side, their duty being to keep his sable majesty cool and drive away the flies.

The boiling well was about a mile from the city, situated among rocks and wild, picturesque scenery.

Only a few of the priests had been told of the coming sacrifice.

Birdie had been taken to the spot before the magician and the king started.

Getting out of the precincts of the city, the litter proceeded with difficulty over the hilly ground.

The bearers halted to take breath, and while they were doing so a travel-stained messenger came up.

"Is this Kasonga land?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Benguela.

"I want to see King Sankorra."

The magician pointed to the king.

"Behold him!" he replied.

The messenger bowed lowly.

"Where are you from?" asked the king, in a faint voice.

"King Urinza of Matama."

At this the King of Kasongas looked up as if strangely excited.

For many years there had been a feud between the two countries, and the last time their respective armies met the Matamas defeated the Kasongas in bloody battle.

"What does Urinza require of me?" inquired Sankorra.

"The immediate release of the imprisoned missionary Hill."

Benguela turned pale with rage.

"Tell him," he replied, as the words hissed from his livid lips, "from me that he is already dead."

"Then," said the messenger, "Urinza wants his bones."

"May the curse of Kingwe a Banza fall on him!"

At the mention of the powerful and mysterious idol's name the messenger fell back in alarm.

"Hush!" said Sankorra. "I thank you for your zeal in my service, but let me reply to this insolent message."

"I am sure so brave a king will know how to answer in fitting terms," replied the magician.

Bending his eyes on the trembling messenger the king spoke.

"Tell Urinza that he shall have no part of Hill's body, and that it is no business of his whether he be dead or alive," he said.

"Then Urinza bids you prepare for war."

"Ha! does he threaten me?"

"Those were his words, oh, King Sankorra!"

"I have a mind to chastise you for this insolence; but, after all, you are only a simple messenger. Go, take my defiance to Urinza, and say I dare him to set foot in Kasongs land."

With trembling steps the messenger departed, thinking himself lucky to have escaped with his life.

The King and Benguela discussed the warlike attitude of King Urinza, and it was determined to call out all men capable of wearing a shield and throwing a spear.

These were to be assembled at a central depot, called the King's Kraal, and there they would be kept in readiness to repel any attempts at invasion.

By the time this was settled they had reached the boiling well, where half a dozen priests were assembled.

Birdie was lying on the ground, bound hand and foot.

The well was about ten feet square and of an unknown depth.

Boiling water, emitting a strong sulphurous smell, poured out of the rocky soil at the rate of a hundred gallons a minute.

A thick cloud of steam hung over the spot, and the line of the stream, by means of which the water escaped, was marked by clouds of vapor for some distance over the sandy plain.

The executioner seized Birdie and forced her on her feet, handling her so roughly that her boy's jacket was torn off.

This revealed her bosom, and the King, to his surprise, saw that she was a girl.

"What is this?" he asked.

"You have discovered my secret," said Birdie. "I am a girl in the disguise of a boy."

Sankorra turned to Benguela.

"I see that the spirits spoke the truth!" he exclaimed.

"How?"

"They said I should have a white wife from over the sea. Behold her!"

"But this girl is a Christian."

"What of it?"

"And condemned to death."

"I spare her."

Benguela was beside himself with rage, for he saw how his lying prediction was being turned against him.

"Beware!" he said.

"Of what?"

"Beware how you protect a Christian, or your kingdom will be taken from you, and you will be driven forth to dwell with the beasts of the field, a homeless wanderer and a penniless outcast.

The king scarcely heard this prophecy.

His eyes were fixed on Birdie's beautiful face, and that mysterious feeling which we call love had already sprung up in his heart.

"She shall not die!" he exclaimed, "for I will make her my wife."

At this unexpected reprieve from an awful death Birdie sank on her knees and held up her bound hands to heaven.

"My God, I thank thee!" she cried, fervently.

[To be continued.]

"Wandering Willie" was commenced in No. 604.

WILD ROSE AND VIOLET;

Or,

Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

CHAPTER XLII.

A JUDICIAL INQUIRY.

MRS. HAWK was not sorry to hear this, and she determined that the first meeting between herself and her delinquent pupil after the serious offense she had committed should be an event which the latter might have cause to remember to the end of her existence.

On the morning after her arrival Mrs. Hawk and daughters, having arranged themselves in their seats with becoming effect, the culprit was ushered by Janet Bly into their presence.

At once these Violet Leigh would have trembled at encountering this grim judicial triumvirate, but the past was not the present, and she herself had undergone a change, and she stood before the stern judges calmly, if not quite indifferently.

Even the long pause the principal thought proper to indulge in on the refractory pupil's entrance, in order to give the latter an opportunity of becoming properly impressed with the terrors of the presence in which she stood, served to take no effect.

Mrs. Hawk's bridling on the pale face no expression of apprehension, she commenced in her usual stern, deep tone:

"So, Miss Leigh, at length we meet again?"

Violet made no reply.

Presently the principal continued:

"I now ask you, Miss Leigh, what have you to say for yourself?"

Violet calmly raised her eyes to the level of Mrs. Hawk's and quietly answered:

"Nothing, ma'am."

"Nothing!" echoed Mrs. Penelope, in tones of surprise.

"Nothing!" ejaculated the juvenile Hawks.

"No, ma'am," repeated Violet.

"And do you imagine for one moment that that will satisfy me?" inquired the preceptress.

Violet remained silent.

"Do you intend to enlighten me?" exclaimed the principal, impatiently; "and in the first place, where have you been?"

There was no answer.

"Do you hear me?" demanded Mrs. Hawk, with growing irritability.

There was still no reply, and Janet interposed.

"I asked Miss Leigh that question, mum, several times, but she would not answer me, mum, or——"

Hold your tongue, Janet!" snapped her mistress, so sharply that the housemaid involuntarily drew back, and shielded her nose with her hand; "wait until you are appealed to, if you please."

Janet closed her lips submissively, and the principal continued:

"I demand an answer. Where have you been?"

"On a visit," returned Violet, in a low tone.

"Where?"

"You must pardon me if I decline saying where."

"No, I will not pardon you. I insist upon knowing," exclaimed Mrs. Hawk.

"I have given my word not to tell," returned Violet.

"You have no right to give your word," passionately responded the incensed preceptress; "your word, indeed! Did ever any one hear such ridiculous nonsense?"

"Disgusting!" murmured the Misses Hawk.

"You are a mere child, and not bound by any such romantic rubbish!" cried the annoyed principal; "tell me instantly!"

"No, madam, I cannot break my word," replied Violet, with quiet firmness.

Mrs. Penelope, finding herself foiled on this point, changed her tactics and said:

"Miss Royston was with you, of course?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"A very well-matched pair, upon my word," remarked the schoolmistress, spitefully; "and pray why did you not return together?"

"Rose—Miss Royston—was not aware that I was coming back. I did not tell her," answered Violet.

"What caused you to return alone?" inquired Mrs. Hawk.

A pained expression passed over the young girl's face at the thought suggested by the questioner, and she stifled a rising sigh.

Violet, however, made no reply either of assent or denial.

"Anyone can see you are not happy," cont nued Mrs. Hawk.

"I am not, indeed," replied the poor girl.

"That is not at all surprising!" sternly replied the preceptress; "you cannot expect to be so after the conduct of which you have been guilty. Of all the tormenting accusers a guilty conscience is the most——"

"My conscience does not accuse me," interrupted Violet, quickly; "neither is my unhappiness caused by the thought of anything I have done, although, could I recall the past I would rather it had been left undone."

So anxious was Priscilla to arrive at this information that she chimed in:

"Of course you must be aware, Miss Leigh, how anxious mamma is on your account, and you must also be assured that we fully share her anxiety, and therefore——"

The fair Priscilla stopped short and cast her eyes upon the parasite Janet, who was by no means a favorite of hers, and who stood craning her neck and licking her thin lips on the tenter-hooks of curiosity to hear all there was to hear concerning Violet's delinquency.

But her hopes were nipped in the bud by Priscilla remarking, with a spiteful blandness:

"I don't think it will be necessary to detain Janet any longer from her household duties, mamma?"

"Decidedly not. You can go, Janet!" exclaimed her mistress, abruptly.

This was a bitter disappointment to the inquisitive housemaid; but there was no disputing the orders she had received, and she was compelled, very much against her will, to depart.

Priscilla continued:

"Feeling, as I was about to remark, as you must do, the great responsibility that attaches itself to us all on your account, I am sure you will not conceal anything from us, but that you will, with your usual candor, tell us everything."

"Oh, yes," chimed in Prudence, in dulcet tones; "I am sure she will, and that she will come to particulars, and let us know distinctly what it is she has done that she wishes could be undone."

"I hope so," wound up Mrs. Penelope, and then addressing herself to Violet she demanded, in a stern and point-blank manner, "What have you done?"

"Nothing, ma'am! At least nothing that is wrong," was the reply, given with all the calmness of conscious innocence.

Mrs. Penelope, in a very irritable and disconcerted tone, said:

"I see you persist in maintaining a dogged obstinacy, and therefore I shall not condescend to ask any questions. I shall deal with you in another manner."

The bell was rung sharply, and Janet entered.

"You will show Miss Leigh to her room," said Mrs. Hawk, with emphasis; "and you will understand that she is to remain in solitary confinement until further orders."

Janet's cunning eyes sparkled, and she opened the door with the utmost cheerfulness to allow the fair prisoner to pass out.

"In my extended experience, my dears," growled the frustrated principal, as the door closed, "I have had the opportunity of observing the mental and moral tendencies of numerous girls, and I unhesitatingly affirm that the pupils Violet Leigh and Rose Royston are two of the most unpromising specimens of advancing womanhood I ever encountered. It is positively terrible to contemplate."

"Awful! fearful!" ejaculated the junior Hawks.

CHAPTER XLIII.

INVIOLABLE SECRECY.

AS is usual, none of the pupils returned strictly at the prescribed time.

A few days after date they began to drop in by twos and threes.

At the end of the week the remnant of the scholars came in with a rush.

Amongst the very latest were Constance Grey, Milly Westlake and Rose Royston, who all arrived together.

The moment Rose was fairly housed she was summoned into the presence of Mrs. Hawk.

The question put to Rose was:

"Well, Miss Royston, where is your friend Violet?"

Rose gave Mrs. Penelope the benefit of a glance from her dark, saucy eyes, which now looked

angier and more defiant than ever, and replied, with a melancholy shake of the head:

"I don't know, ma'am."

"You don't?" ejaculated the principal, with a well-assumed surprise.

"No, ma'am," was the blunt response.

"That is strange, Miss Royston, very strange, considering you ran away from my establishment, and might have since been visiting together."

But Rose was quite as sharp as her scholastic questioner, and fixing her eyes scrutinizingly upon Mrs. Hawk, she said, quietly:

"Who informed you that we had been visiting, ma'am?"

The grand lady was somewhat embarrassed by this unexpected question; but replied, though not without some hesitation:

"No one informed me. I heard you had—accidentally concluded that—you had been together ever since."

Rose did not allow her conviction to betray itself in her countenance. All she returned was a lingering:

"Ah, yes!" and then waited for further information.

This was not long in coming.

"You have been together, have you not?" asked Mrs. Hawk, in an enforcing tone.

"Well, then, to tell you the truth, we have," was the prompt reply.

"I was sure of it! I was positive!" exclaimed the principal, with a flash of triumph; "and now I wish to know where and with whom you've been staying during the vacation?"

"I'm very sorry, ma'am, I can't oblige you with the information you require; but it's a secret which I've promised to keep, and therefore you mustn't ask me."

"Mustn't ask you?" Mrs. Hawk re-echoed, fiercely; "have you the audacity to dictate to me what I must do and what I must not do? I demand an answer, and I must and will have it, you insolent—a—a—I don't know how to classify you."

Rose remained perfectly placid and collected under this fire of wrath, and replied not a word, and the principal burst out anew:

"You and your companion are alike disgraceful in every way! I can get no information from either."

"Oh?" cried Rose, vehemently; "then Violet has come back. She is here?"

Mrs. Hawk in her passion had betrayed that fact, but was still as much in the dark as ever about what she desired to know.

"Miss Leigh has returned, has she not, ma'am?" Rose asked, with real earnestness in her tone and manner.

The irritated preceptress, who felt she could have bitten off the inquirer's head—and her own if she could have got at it—out of sheer spite, would not answer another question.

The bell was rung, Janet appeared as usual, and Rose was consigned for the present—like her schoolfellow—to solitary confinement until further orders.

But Mrs. Hawk had not done yet. The entire club, known as the "Jolly Girls," were summoned when she threw herself in a frantic state of appeal upon their sympathies.

"As my oldest and most advanced pupils," she exclaimed, excitedly, "in whose moral and intellectual welfare I am so deeply interested, I make my request to you, feeling sure that it will at once be responded to. Yes! from you I shall get the truth, I feel confident."

But to her great disgust Constance Grey replied, in the most decided manner:

"You will excuse me, Mrs. Hawk, when, in the names of my companions, I take the liberty of suggesting that we are sent here to be educated, not to be cross-questioned."

In utter despair at the evident determination of the young ladies not to betray one another, the incensed matron positively groaned.

"We are really very sorry, ma'am," said Milly Westlake, in a tone which she intended to be soothing, "but the 'Jolly Girls' are pledged never to reveal each other's secrets."

"J—Jolly G—irls!" almost gasped Mrs. Penelope, in a species of horror; "what in the name of goodness do you mean?"

"Why," returned Constance, boldly, "we mean that we have formed ourselves into a select club of which all the members are called 'Jolly Girls,' and any one betraying the smallest secret of our society would at at once forfeit all claim to membership, and be looked upon as a spy and a traitoress. Pray don't ask us any more questions, because by the rules of our sisterhood our lips are hermetically sealed."

The indignant principal, with an angry, impetuous ejaculation and a fierce wave of the hand, banished the stanch confederates from her presence.

CHAPTER XLIV.

RE-ENTER UNCLE BEN.

WHEN Rose was ushered into the solitary apartment appointed to bring her by its isolation to a proper sense of her delinquencies, she trudged into her prison as buoyantly as though she had been stepping into a four-oared cutter for a row on the river.

She now felt confident that her beloved schoolfellow was safe beneath the same roof.

This was a great weight off her mind.

Let me then explain that Harry Targent, instead of forswearing the laws of Hymen, had—with the most reckless disregard for his light trowsers—gone down on his knees to Rose Royston one bright moonlight evening and vowed by the majestic luminary over his head and the surrounding myriads of stars that he loved her to the very verge of distraction, and that he was prepared to take her that very moment.

Poor Rose, a little scared, perhaps, at the impetuosity of her young lover, but very quickly—being quite as deeply in love herself—getting over her timidity, could only express in a somewhat faltering manner, her willingness to be loved and cherished, and to receive the betrothal so earnestly offered.

And so the young couple from that moment considered themselves as entirely bound and engaged.

It was this that made her heart thrill with joy as the key turned in the lock, and made her, like a caged song-bird inclined to sing blithely through her prison-bars.

And not inclined merely.

It is possible that she would in a few moments have proved to Mrs. Hawk the defiant hardihood of her nature by bursting forth into a stream of vocal melody.

But ere she had time to do this, her attention was arrested by a muffled sound near at hand, like a moan elicited by some great pain or grief.

The sounds of pain still continuing, she rapped against the paper with her knuckles, at first softly, and then gradually with more force.

Presently the sounds, as they appeared to her to be, ceased.

Rose continued to rap, and in a few seconds a voice, that seemed to be a long way off, exclaimed, in accents barely audible:

"Who's there?"

Rose could not recognize the voice in any way as familiar; but she replied:

"It's I!"

"Where—are you?" asked the invisible speaker again.

"In the next room to you, I think," Rose answered. "Who are you? I don't recognize your voice."

"Violet Leigh" were the next words that reached her ears.

Rose started and clapped her hands with joy.

"What, Violet, darling! is it you, and I not to know it?" she cried.

Rose eagerly set herself to arrive at the precise spot that would bring her nearest to her schoolfellow.

After tapping the wall all along carefully, and extracting nothing from her efforts but the cold, lifeless sound which the plaster returned, she came suddenly to a portion where the sound was different.

It was more sonorous and quite different in quality.

Rose paused a moment thoughtfully, and examined the wall at this spot with much careful scrutiny.

"It looks the same as the rest, outwardly," she said to herself; "but I think there must be a door, or something of that kind underneath, which has been papered over."

She did not hesitate long as to what she should do. She had in her pocket a small pair of scissors in a sheath, and with these she removed a small portion of the paper.

The result of this operation proved that her opinion was correct.

"It is a door!" she exclaimed: "and now comes the question, is it locked? If so, it will be useless to tear away the paper; if not, in less than five minutes I shall be once more with Violet."

Carefully manipulating the wall in this locality, and guided by her touch, she felt her way to that portion where the lock would naturally be.

This, by the aid of her scissors, she soon exposed to view.

"Can't you get through?" asked Violet, from the other room, in a tone that now sounded much more familiar and distinct.

"It shan't be my fault if I don't, dear," responded her friend, cheerfully.

There was no handle to the door. That had been removed.

Neither on examination was it found to be locked; but still it was fast, and defied all efforts to move or open it.

But, by dint of further investigation, Rose discovered it was bolted.

The bolt was rusty, but the energetic efforts brought to bear on it at length drew it back.

But not enough. The door appeared more inclined to yield, there still remained some obstacle that prevented its opening.

Mounting on to a chair, Rose, without the least remorse for the damage she was inflicting, passed her scissors

It was a reckless ride over fences and through farms, with never a pause for breath. As they passed farm-houses, the heroic rider shouted for help, and others joined in the chase, until the number of pursuers was a dozen or more; still the brave little horse kept the lead, as one after another of the fresh steeds fell to the rear.

After a race of twenty or twenty-five miles, and when within a quarter of a mile of Lowry City, a small village in St. Clair County, the race ended, and the question of endurance was determined in favor of the rider and his gallant little steed, which ran directly over his wolfship, knocking it down.

Kirtley was unarmed, and springing from his saddle, grasped the vicious animal by the mouth, pinioning its jaws in a death-grip. In a few minutes others came to his aid, and a strong cord was bound round the wolf's mouth, rendering it harmless. In their excitement, however, the parties drew the cords so tight that the animal died of strangulation and exhaustion shortly after being captured.

It proved to be a full-grown black mountain-wolf, fully three feet high, and would weigh probably one hundred pounds, and even looked much larger.

Mr. Kirtley brought the carcass to Brownington the next day, and it was on exhibition at Hirch & Co.'s hide and fur store.

SLANDERERS.—Slanderers are like flies that pass over all a person's good parts and only alight upon his wounds.

EXCITING WOLF CHASE.—A HOTEL-KEEPER OF BROWNINGTON, MO., CAPTURES A BLACK WOLF AFTER A CHASE OF TWENTY MILES, AND CONQUERS THE ANIMAL WITH HIS BARE HANDS.—SEE PAGE 235.

ROY, THE RANGER.

A Tale of the Mexican War.

CHAPTER XIV.

FORT BROWN.

"THERE'S the guide!" cried Roy.

"*Si, señor!*" answered the Mexican cavalier, showing his white teeth, in what he intended to be a smile of cordiality. "*El señora* bade me await you here."

This Mexican was Estevan, who was now as devoted to Zelia as he had formerly been to Romano Falcon.

"Good!" exclaimed Walker. "Lead on, my gallant bull-fighter, and show us the way to Fort Brown."

The appellation of "bull-fighter" was called forth by the fanciful costume that Estevan wore. It was the characteristic dress of a Mexican cavalier of rank, richly bedizened with lace and buttons, and surmounted by the broad-brimmed sombrero.

In the silk sash around his waist he carried a knife and a brace of silver-mounted pistols—the very pistols that had belonged to Romano Falcon, and which he had been allowed to appropriate—and a pair of large silver spurs, with huge rowels, jingled from the heels of his boots.

In this garb Estevan, with his swarthy complexion, coal-black hair, and drooping, black mustache, made quite a picturesque appearance.

"Follow!" said Estevan. In answer to Captain Walker, and he put spurs to his horse and led the way.

They were compelled to follow him in single file, on account of the narrowness of the bridle-path.

Captain Walker rode next to him, and Roy was next, and then Tom, and then the three rangers.

Captain Walker looked back over his shoulder and gave his head a significant jerk toward the guide.

"Is he safe, do you think?" he inquired.

"Undoubtedly. She answers for him, and I'll answer for her," replied Roy.

"All right. But I'll keep a sharp eye over him; and at the least sign of treachery I'll put a bullet through him."

If Estevan heard these words he made no sign. He rode steadily forward.

It was a winding, devious way, turning and twisting about to avoid various impassable places in the shape of rocks, ravines and morasses.

At last the sky burst upon their vision, denoting that they had reached the edge of the chaparral.

Presently they emerged from the wood, and a plain lay before them, bordered on one side by the Rio Grande, for they could see its waters shimmering in the sunlight.

"Yonder is Fort Brown!" said Estevan, pointing across the plain. "*Adios, señors!*"

He wheeled his horse about and disappeared into the chaparral from which they had come.

"He's off!" cried Captain Walker.

"Good luck go with him!" responded Tom Meade.

Roy gazed curiously upon the stout old general. This was his first encounter with "Old Rough-and-Ready," and he was interested in his appearance, and very favorably impressed by it.

Captain Walker rode next as sturdy and as vigorous as an old oak-tree that has withstood the storms of fifty Winters.

"So you are from Major Monroe?" said the general. "Never were men more welcome! And how did you contrive to get through to me?"

Captain Walker recounted the particulars of their expedition, ending with:

"I can thank my lieutenant here, Roy Belling-ham, for the success that has crowned our efforts."

The general's attention being thus directed to Roy, he took a critical survey of him, and shook his head approvingly.

"A likely lad!" he said. "Colonel May ought to have him in his squadron of dragoons."

"No doubt, general; but I can't spare him," answered Walker.

"I suppose not; but now let us hear how the major is situated at Point Isabel, and what prospect there is of the enemy attacking him."

Captain Walker gave the general all the intelligence he had upon the subject, and then he and Roy retired, leaving General Taylor to meditate over the situation.

Roy walked out upon the esplanade of the fort to take a view of the river and the town upon the opposite bank, calculating what resistance the fort could make in case of an attack, or what damage it was likely to inflict upon the foe.

Fronting each other for an extent of more than two miles, and within musket range, were batteries, shotted, and the officers and men, in many instances, waiting impatiently for orders to apply the matches; yet nothing had been done to provoke the firing of a gun, or any act of violence.

The town of Matamoras, across the river, at the distance from which Roy gazed at it, appeared to cover a large extent of ground, with some handsome buildings; but he imagined the greater portion of them to be indifferent one-storied houses, with roofs of straw, and walls of mud or sunburnt brick.

During peace, the population was said to be five or six thousand people, but it was now filled to overflowing with troops belonging to the army of General Arista.

Report said from five to ten thousand, of all sorts, regular and militia.

Roy received these details from Captain Hawkins, who joined him while he was making these observations.

Captain Hawkins was attached to the artillery, was the next officer in command under Major Brown, and was a fine-looking man and a good soldier.

Roy became his guest whilst he remained at the fort, for the captain conceived quite a liking for the young volunteer.

The situation of the American army was now very critical.

Fort Brown was open to an attack from an overwhelming host, who would be aided by the simultaneous efforts of all the batteries in Matamoras.

It seemed almost hopeless that a handful of men could bear up against such odds; but, even if this were not the case, the enemy might still attain their object by a regular siege, there being, at the time, but eight days' rations in camp.

The country between Fort Brown and Point Isabel had been seized by a large force, and the latter post was in hourly expectation of an attack.

The Mexicans, by their rapid movements, and the continual influx of their troops at Matamoras, evinced a vigor and determination of resistance that, to a great part of the American army, was totally unexpected.

General Taylor well knew that upon his conduct in this emergency depended in a great measure the spirit of the coming contest, as well as his own military credit.

Three courses were before him; either to remain on the bank of the Rio Grande and brave the enemy, while Major Monroe did the same, or to attempt the relief of Point Isabel; or, lastly, to abandon his position and fall back into Texas.

The latter was utterly untenable, and the former would in a few days reduce his men to starvation.

There was then no honorable alternative but marching to Point Isabel with a part of his force, and, after relieving it, to retrace his route to the river fort.

The attempt would leave his little garrison on the river surrounded by overwhelming numbers, and could be only made with a superior enemy before and behind.

It was a daring one—but the time for cautious alternatives had passed away.

Having come to this conclusion, General Taylor summoned his officers to a council, and the movement was determined on.

It began on May-day at four o'clock in the afternoon. General Taylor, with the main part of the army of occupation, left Fort Brown, *en route* for Point Isabel.

Roy and Tom remained in the fort, but Captain Walker and the three rangers went with General Taylor.

The army marched through the chaparral, guided by Walker, without meeting the enemy, and, entering the broad, rolling prairie, continued moving until midnight.

Although the men were greatly fatigued, they were obliged to sleep under arms, without tents or fires.

The march was resumed the next day, and the army, after suffering greatly from heat and want of water, reached Point Isabel at noon.

This march afforded an opportunity for the long-pending war-storm to burst.

The enemy fondly imagined that it had been occasioned by the fear of the American general, and the joy of the Mexicans reached the most extravagant bounds.

General Taylor had left at the river fort the Seventh Regiment of infantry, Captain Bragg's battery, Captain Lord, with his company, and an eighteen-pound battery, the whole commanded by Major Jacob Brown. He was instructed to expend as little ammunition as possible, to fire the eighteen-pounders at regular intervals, in case of being surrounded, and on no account to attempt offensive operations.

Before daylight of May 3d a battery of seven

guns, stationed at Matamoras, began a steady cannonade upon the fort.

The garrison was soon in a condition for reaching, and in a few moments the eighteen-pounders were driving their balls into the heart of the city.

This continued for a quarter of an hour, when the Mexican guns ceased, and were succeeded by volleys of shells and shot from a fort below Matamoras.

This was afterward joined by a mortar battery, and the cannonade continued, with but little interruption, until night.

Very little injury was inflicted, however, upon the fort; one man only being killed.

The next morning Captain Walker and his three rangers returned to the fort. He brought the news of General Taylor's safe arrival at Point Isabel, and dispatches for the commandant of the fort.

"You've had a lively time since I've been away," he said.

"You bet we have!" answered Toss. "The Mexicans have wasted enough iron on us to start an old junk-shop."

"But they have not damaged us much," added Roy. "Is General Taylor about to resume the offensive?"

"Yes; and I must get back to him as soon as possible. I wouldn't miss the first brush with the enemy for considerable."

"Nor I! If there's to be a battle I want to be in it!" cried Roy. "We will go with you — eh, Toss?"

"I'm convenient to anything you say," responded Toss; but he did not display so much enthusiasm in the matter as Roy.

But though they were anxious to leave the fort, it was found to be impossible to do so during that day, there being too many of the enemy's lancers watching the fort.

The Mexicans did not renew their fire until the next day, an interval which the Americans improved by finishing the defenses of their fort.

All worked with a will at this task. They provided as much as lay in their power against the effects of the hostile batteries.

Daylight of the morning following disclosed a new battery, in a field east of the Rio Grande; and during the whole of that day the Mexican troops concentrated around and near it.

The Americans expected an assault, especially as the army in Matamoras appeared to be uncommonly active.

In the afternoon the new battery, together with those in Matamoras, opened upon the garrison, who answered them with six-pound howitzers.

The enemy, however, evidently meditated an assault, since they soon ceased firing, and commenced hovering before the works as though selecting a point of attack.

"I would give something to know what those fellows are about," said Major Brown, as he surveyed the enemy's movements through his field-glass.

He made this observation whilst standing in the midst of a group of his officers beneath the Starry Flag that floated proudly and defiantly over the fort. Amongst these officers were Roy and Toss.

At the suggestion of Captain Hawkins they had been acting as aids for the major.

"I will go and find out!" exclaimed Roy.

This proposal was made quietly, and without any bragadocio.

The major turned a surprised glance upon the volunteer.

"You?" he responded. "Rather a risky piece of business, my boy."

"I'm taking risks just now," replied Roy, with a smile; "that's what I am here for."

The major shook his head doubtfully.

"It's too dangerous a task," he said. "You are young yet—there may be many years before you—you must not throw your life away."

"Somebody ought to go, and I can be spared as well as anybody here," urged Roy. "Besides, I have an idea that I can do it, and come back in safety. I have a splendid horse here, and I can dodge those fellows."

"The Mexicans are excellent horsemen," returned the major, gravely.

"Not better than Roy, here," cried Captain Walker. "He sits a horse as if he has born in the saddle. I'll go with you, Roy. Let's take our boys."

"No, no," answered Roy, quickly. "Too many would attract attention. I had better go alone."

"So I think," said the major. "Such a reconnoissance would be of great service to us, as it might develop the number of the enemy upon this side of the river and their intentions toward us. Shall I let him go, Captain Hawkins?" he added to that officer.

"By all means," replied Captain Hawkins. "I have the utmost confidence in Lieutenant Bellingham's skill and daring, and I am sure that he will give a good account of himself."

"Very good; let him try it, then," rejoined the major.

Roy carefully saddled his horse—a fleet-limbed stallion, with a glossy bay coat, white face, and shaded with white upon the legs.

Toss assisted Roy in this operation.

"Had'n you better take me along?" he said.

"No, Toss; your horse is not as good as mine."

"Well, he is a beauty!"

Roy vaulted lightly into the saddle.

"Don't you intend to take your carbine?" cried Toss.

"No; it would only be in the way. My sword and pistols will be sufficient."

"A splendid mount!" exclaimed Major Brown, looking admiringly at the young rider and his steed.

ROY, THE RANGER.—"'FOLLOW!' SAID ESTEVAN, IN ANSWER TO CAPTAIN WALKER, AND HE PUT SPURS TO HIS HORSE AND LED THE WAY. THEY WERE COMPELLED TO FOLLOW HIM IN SINGLE FILE."

"And a splendid rider," said Captain Hawkins. "Be careful, Roy," he called out to him.

"Never fear!"

Roy rode through the sallyport into the plain.

CHAPTER XV.

ROY'S EXPLOIT.

THE officers and men of the garrison lined the parapets of the fort to watch Roy as he rode forth upon his hazardous mission.

As I have before stated, the Mexicans had crossed the river some distance below the fort, and constructed a battery.

The formation of the ground here had been very favorable for their purpose.

The chaparral grew nearly to the river's bank, stretching from there a long distance into the plain.

Within the chaparral, and sheltered by this battery, a large body of troops had been concentrated.

It looked as if an assault upon the fort from the land side was imminent.

There was quite a plain, however, between the chaparral and the fort, which could be commanded by the guns of the fort, as they could be brought to bear in that direction.

This would prevent them, though, from answering the enemy's batteries in Matamoras.

In this way the fort might be placed between two fires, with only adequate means to meet one of them.

The situation was a critical one. Anxious for the security of the little garrison under his command, Major Brown had permitted Roy to sally forth on this hazardous reconnoitring expedition.

He shook his head gravely as he saw him go.

"I am afraid he will never come back," he said, uttering his thought involuntarily.

Captain Walker, standing beside him, overheard his words.

"Oh, yes, he will!" cried the brave Texan. "You don't know Roy Bellingham as well as I do, major. He has nerves of steel and the eye of a hawk; and that horse is just the best animal that ever was saddled."

"No one can hope more fervently for his return than myself," replied the major. "He's too likely a lad to be easily spared, and we are sure to want every man here before General Taylor can come to our relief."

"That's so; they have got us in a rather tight place here, that's a fact; but I guess we can give a pretty good account of ourselves."

"We will try to do so."

"By-the-way, major, it might not be a bad idea to have my rangers ready for a sudden dash to help Roy, if he should be hard pressed," suggested Captain Walker, after a slight pause.

"Certainly; a very good idea," returned the major.

Walker gave the necessary instructions to Toss and the rangers, and they got their horses in readiness for a sudden mount in case Roy should require their aid.

That gallant youth, however, was cantering gently over the plain toward the battery, as if taking a quiet ride, and apparently oblivious of the fact that a thousand eyes were watching his progress, and a thousand minds speculating upon his purpose.

A troop of lancers, headed by a richly-dressed officer, deployed from the chaparral and galloped swiftly along the plain, but in a contrary direction from the course that Roy was pursuing, for whilst he followed the river's bank, they stretched across the plain.

Roy smiled as he perceived this movement.

"They think I am on my way to Point Isabel, and they intend to head me off," he muttered to himself. "There's not a horse in that troop that Frank cannot distance."

Frank was the name of the good steed who so proudly bore his courageous rider.

Roy continued on his way, approaching within gun-shot of the battery, and riding along the face of it, and carefully noting the number of the foe with his keen eyes.

Temerity is often a safeguard.

Amazed by Roy's audacity, and, possibly bewildered as to his design, the enemy never fired a gun at him.

Officers and men gazed in wonder on the bold rider, and let him pass on his way unmolested.

But when, after having ridden along the face of the battery and a portion of the chaparral, he wheeled his horse about and turned his head toward the fort, the foe awoke from their apathy, and a hurried and indiscriminate discharge of musketry flashed from the whole line.

Roy, however, had foreseen this, and the moment he turned he touched Frank lightly with the spur, and the horse darted into the plain like an arrow launched from a bow.

When the reports of the guns broke upon Roy's ears he was out of musket-range.

A discharge from the battery followed next, but the balls flew wide of the mark.

It requires a good gunner to hit a flying horseman.

A shout went up jubilantly from the group of anxious watchers on the parapet of the fort when they saw that Roy was unharmed by this storm of bullets and cannon-balls.

Yet he was still in danger. The troop of lancers, divining his purpose of returning to the fort, dashed quickly forward to intercept him.

There were thirty of them in all, armed with long lances, with their fluttering pennons and swords. Roy could not perceive any carbines amongst them.

"Good!" he told himself. "I think I can give these fellows a long chase."

The lancers spread themselves over the ground between him and the fort.

They had got the start of him, and he must ride through them to reach the fort.

"Ready, boys!" cried Captain Walker. "We'll be wanted pretty soon."

"Just wait a while," said Toss Meade. "They would spit Roy like a turkey for roasting before we could get to them. Roy isn't coming this way just yet. He'll empty some of those saddles first."

Toss's surmise proved correct.

The lancers, in their eagerness to intercept Roy, had ridden toward the fort, spreading out, lanlike, as they went.

This left the plain clear.

To the great surprise of friend and foe, Roy wheeled his horse about and went, at a swinging gallop, toward the distant chaparral that bounded the plain.

This was the chaparral through which Estevan had guided Roy and his comrades, at the bidding of Zelia Bellingham.

The lancers uttered a whoop, and dashed fiercely in pursuit. In this pursuit they scattered widely.

It soon became evident that their captain was not as well mounted as some of his men.

Two of them took the lead, but widely separated. When he found that he had distanced all but these two, Roy suddenly wheeled about, reined in his horse, drew his sword, and prepared for the onset.

This bold attitude surprised his two pursuers. They approached each other, slackened their speed, held a whispered conference, and then came on to the attack.

Roy made no effort to draw his pistols. Sword in hand, he calmly waited their approach.

His horse pawed the ground with his forefeet and shook his mane, as if in delight at the approaching conflict.

Roy held the bridle firmly in his left hand.

The lancers did not come straight forward. They circled about him like hawks in a barnyard.

Roy had expected some such manœuvre.

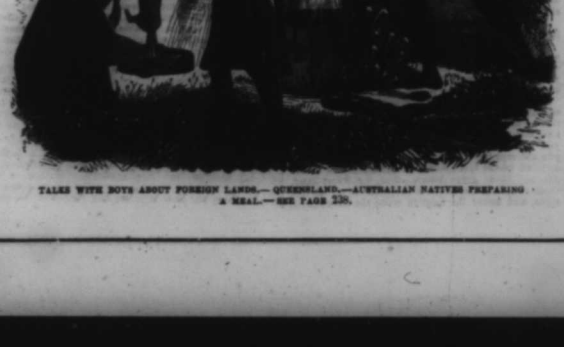
Suddenly one wheeled to the right of him, the other to the left, and, with a fierce yell, charged upon him with leveled lances.

They evidently expected to transfix him between them; but, when they felt sure of him, his horse rose in the air as if he had been impelled by a spring, and darted away, whilst the two lancers, impaled by each other's weapons, met in a rude shock, and horses and riders were hurled to the ground.

The horses arose to their feet again and galloped, snorting loudly, over the plain, but the lancers never rose again.

A cheer from the fort, and a yell of rage from the lancers, greeted this exploit.

Another pursuer bore fiercely down upon Roy. This one was mounted upon a powerful black charger, and though his dress was similar to that of the lancers, it differed enough to show that he was not one, if the weapon he bore had not told the story more plainly.



TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—QUEENSLAND.—AUSTRALIAN NATIVES PREPARING A MEAL.—SEE PAGE 238.

This Mexican did not carry a lance. His weapon was a far more effective one. In practiced hands, a terrible one. It was a lasso.

Attached to the horn of his saddle was a rope of raw hide, and he held the noose of this rope—or *lariat*, as it is called there—ready for the throw.

These Mexican lasso-throwers can noose a buffalo bull by the horns and tumble him in the dust with as much ease as a Southern darkey wrings the neck of a turkey-gobbler.

Roy was not ignorant of the nature of this peculiar weapon. He had seen Mexican hunters often use it, yet he did not put his horse to his full speed.

The Mexican came on, sweeping the lasso in circles around his head to gain the impetus for the desired throw.

Again did Roy let his pistols rest in their holsters. He could have picked this man from his saddle before he could have approached him near enough to cast the lasso; but Roy did not think it time to use his pistols yet. There were many lancers yet to be avoided. But he felt the edge of his sabre as he rode along, and smiled approvingly.

He let the Mexican diminish the distance between them, though the could easily have ridden away from him.

The other lancers were closing in a circle about him, but this circle was a large one, as, by this time, he had utterly confused them as to the direction he might take next.

Roy kept a wary eye upon his pursuer, waiting for him to cast the lasso.

It came whistling through the air, and Roy saw, somewhat to his surprise, that his horse's head was the object aimed at, and not himself.

The lasso struck Frank between the ears, in front of Roy's face, and one sweep of his keen blade severed the tough hide, the noose remaining where it fell.

The Mexican had wheeled his horse at the moment of casting, as is customary, and before he could tell that he had failed, Roy was upon him.

There was another sweep of the sword, and then another horse galloped riderless over the plain.

Four of the lancers now spurred furiously upon Roy, and he no longer disdained the use of his pistols.

Shifting his sword to his left hand, he drew one pistol from its holster. The nearest lancer received its contents, and the others wheeled off and began to use their pistols.

Roy was now the target of a regular fusillade of pistol-bullets; but he was beyond the range of most of them, and he exhausted the contents of his second pistol without much effect, merely scratching a horse with it.

Being armed only with his sword now, for it was utterly out of the question to attempt reloading the pistols, he determined to return to the fort.

He made a dash through the circle of his foes by putting Frank at his best speed, and was soon riding directly for the fort with only one pursuer near him.

This pursuer was the captain of the lancers. His steed was comparatively fresh, for he had directed his men from a distance, making no attempt to close with Roy until now.

His men followed in his rear, some distance behind. The sun was shining brightly in the heavens, and the riders and horses cast shadows on the prairie before them.

The chase was now at its most interesting point, as Roy was riding straight for the fort, and was in advance of the whole body of his pursuers, having "doubled" upon them, to use a hunting phrase.

But the lancer captain appeared to gain upon him perceptibly, and fast and furiously his men followed, though some distance behind; but this distance was decreasing every moment.

Captain Walker, Toss, and the rangers had mounted their horses, and awaited Major Brown's orders to issue forth to Roy's relief.

The major watched the pursuit anxiously from the parapet.

"Boy when, major!" called out Walker, excitedly.

"I will," answered the major. "Poor boy! he'll be cut to pieces before they can reach him. They can't save h m—he's past saving now!"

This was what the major muttered to himself, and so he did not order the rangers to sally forth.

Roy's situation did appear a desperate one. The lancer captain was close upon him now, his sword gleaming vengefully in his right hand.

It was an exciting death-chase over that smiling, sunlit plain.

Roy's head was bent over his horse's neck, his sword-blade projecting like a bright horn from the animal's head.

The lancer captain drew nearer. Nearer yet; his horse's head had passed Frank's flank, the bright sword was raised to cleave Roy's skull, but the blow never descended, for Roy's sword suddenly flashed behind him, and the lancer captain's head was nearly severed from his body.

Roy had watched his shadow on the ground, and knew just when to strike.

"Heavens and earth! where did the boy learn such a trick as that?" cried Major Brown, amazedly.

A terrific shout from the fort greeted this feat of swordsmanship.

"Is he down?" exclaimed Walker, nervously.

"Not a bit of it!" exclaimed Major Brown; "he's cut off that lancer's head as a boy cuts a thistle-top with a stick. Now, now, Captain Walker!" he added, excitedly, "out and at them! Now's the time!"

"Come on, boys!" cried Walker.

With a yell, the rangers dashed through the sally-port into the plain.

The lancers, dismayed by the unexpected and strange death of their captain, did not await their onset, but wheeled about and fled.

"How are you, boys?" cried Roy, riding up to the rangers; "why didn't you come a little sooner; the fun's all over!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SIEGE OF THE FORT.

CAPTAIN WALKER shook hands with Roy vigorously. "My boy, I'm proud of you!" he exclaimed. "I told the major you could do it, and you have. But it appears to me that you took unnecessary risks."

"Oh, no, I did not," answered Roy, carelessly. "I knew what I was about."

"Your horse is splendidly trained."

"Yes; he's the only one I have got now. I lost the other one, as you know, in our first expedition. It was lucky for me that I left Frank at Point Isabel that time. I wouldn't part with Frank for his weight in gold!"

Roy patted his horse affectionately on the head, and the docile animal whinnied as if he understood what was being said.

"Why do you call him Frank?" inquired Walker.

"I like the name," replied Roy, with a smile. "Don't you think he has a frank face?"

"He has a very intelligent one, and an almost human look in his eyes; I have remarked that before," responded Walker. "I had an idea that you named him after some friend."

Toss began to whistle "The Girl I Left Behind Me" in a very expressive and significant manner.

"Oh, that's it!" exclaimed Walker, laughingly. "But how can a girl's name be Frank?"

"Which it was Mary Frances—Frank, for short—don't you see?" replied Toss, with owlish gravity.

"I do," rejoined Walker.

"Pshaw!" ejaculated Roy, and he blushed like a girl.

They rode into the fort, and Roy received the complimentsof the officers for the skilful and daring exploit he had performed; and he received them with that modesty that denotes the true hero.

"Well, lieutenant, what is the prospect of an attack from yonder quarter?" inquired Major Brown.

"I do not think they intend attacking the fort from that direction," replied Roy.

"Indeed! How large a force do you think they have there?"

"Between three and four thousand men. I saw enough to convince me that there is an army there."

"For what purpose, do you imagine?"

"To operate against General Taylor."

"Ha! to prevent him from coming to our relief here?"

"Exactly."

"The general ought to be apprised of the situation," cried Captain Walker.

"So I think, captain," answered Major Brown.

"You and your men must try and get through to him."

"We will," rejoined Walker. "We know the road pretty well by this time, and we will go the first favorable opportunity."

This opportunity was not likely to present itself soon, for the enemy's squadrons were seen spreading themselves across the plain. These evolutions continued until the fort was entirely surrounded.

The major would not permit any sorties from the fort, as the enemy's squadrons kept within supporting distance of each other, and their numbers were too preponderating to admit of any prospect of success against them.

He caused his signal-guns to be fired in order to apprise General Taylor of his being besieged.

Before daylight of the 6th of May all the Mexican batteries were in full blast, and red-hot shells and shot poured into the fort in one uninterrupted stream.

The garrison did not reply, on account of the small quantity of ammunition, which it was their desire to retain in order to meet the expected assault.

A serious calamity now befell the garrison. Major Brown, while superintending some new defenses, was struck by a cannon-ball, which tore away a portion of his right leg and rendered amputation necessary.

This operation, however, failed to save his life. The wound was mortal. He was carried to a small bombproof, and tended with the most assiduous care. He lived long enough to hear the victorious reports of his general's cannon at Resaca de la Palma. His loss was at that time severely felt.

In consequence of this casualty the command of the fort devolved on Captain Hawkins.

The fire from the hostile batteries continued until noon, when it ceased for two hours.

A dull fire then commenced from a single battery, during which parties of lancers approached near enough to be fired at from the fort, and suffered severely for their temerity.

The firing continued until five o'clock, when the Mexicans sounded a parley, and two officers approached the fort, bearing a white flag.

"Who can speak Spanish here?" inquired Captain Hawkins.

"I can, to some extent," answered Roy.

"Good! You are the man for me. Come with me and we'll hear what these Mexicans have to say."

Accompanied by Roy, Captain Hawkins advanced to meet the flag of truce.

The officers who bore it were a captain and a lieutenant, whose uniforms denoted that they were attached to some general's staff.

Being interrogated by Roy as to their mission to the fort, they delivered the following message from General Arista, which Roy translated to Captain Hawkins:

"You are besieged by forces sufficient to take you, and there is, moreover, a numerous division encamped near you, which, free from other cares, will keep off any succor which you may expect to receive."

"You were right, Roy, in your opinion of the disposal they have made of yonder force," said Captain Hawkins.

(To be continued.)

"Roy the Ranger" was commenced in No. 61.

EASY LESSONS IN PHONOGRAPHY, OR SHORT-HAND.

DOUBLE LENGTHS.

ANOTHER beautiful and useful principle. Many young writers make their simple consonant letters longer than necessary, sometimes twice as long as they need be, but now it is time to be more careful. As we have said before, there is no room for flourishing in Short-hand, for everything, like a line or direction, means something, more or less. In this case the extending of a letter sign to about double its usual size adds a new feature of abbreviation.

In this lesson we shall treat only of the lengthening of *curved* letters. The doubling of *straight* letters is applied at a more advanced stage.

Doubling *l* or *r* (*ay*) *adds tr or gr.*

Doubling any other curve adds *tr, dr,* or *thr.*

The *notes* are the same as the single letters, only with the addition of *ker, gar, ter, der,* or *ther*; as double *Lay* is called Lay-ler, double *Em*, Em-ter, etc.

The single consonant letter in *doubles* is sounded first, then the vowel, then the *ter, der*, etc.

An *n* hook, *n* hook and circle *s*, or a shon hook may be added to the end of a *double*, following the order of sounding as stated. The first half stroke is written in the usual position, and the second half continues the direction of the curve.

As we are having reference now to the formation of single words by a single sign, and not the formation of several words by one sign (as we shall before many weeks), we desire you to be sure that you understand all the *simples* thoroughly before you attempt the *compounds*. Write out, as recommended in the last lesson, all the examples in the order and words given below—first, the Short-hand, then the English beneath it; then cover up the signs, and under the English write the Short-hand, and so on, alternately, comparing and correcting as you go. The principle, you will see, saves you the trouble of writing another single stroke sign, and adding the *r* hook in every such case, and is much more easy and speedy.

But when a vowel follows this termination, *shon*, the usual stroke and R hook are required, as in *sultry, sundry*, Stay-Ter, Sen-Der, instead of Ias-Layer, Ias-Ender.

Make your single letters about one-eighth of an inch long, or a little longer, and the doubles, of course, twice as long. Remember that all the preceding principles, more or less, may be applied to the succeeding; that all the present rules and examples may include one or more of the past; and that the amending rules will require a perfect knowledge and inclusion of the present.

When two heavy strokes come together, like *b* or *d* and *t* or *ng*, they do not taper where they join, but are heavy throughout, except at the end; as in blank, devise, division, devotion, etc. Use the *w* hook whenever convenient. Also the circle S.

In like manner write: Banker, thinker, longer, languor, fighter, fitter, voter, Easter, Astor, shutter or shudder, latter or ladder, altar or alter, metre, heater or weather, solter, smaiter, flatter, shorter, wider, wonder.

HALF-LENGTHS.

T or *D* is added to the usual alphabet letters (with a few exceptions hereafter named), by making the strokes one-half the usual length. That is, you add more by making *less!* And we believe it happens, also, that the largest words in the language may be written with the shortest signs.

When a hook for *l* or *r* ends a word, *t* and *d* may be distinguished by making the hook wider, like a *w* hook, to show that *d* follows the hook, and light when followed by *t*. This is not necessary, however, as a rule.

May, Em, En, or Ar add *t* after halving, by a light sign, and *d* by a heavy sign. Lay and Ar halved and Ay, if must be made downward.

Halved Ray, if it follows another letter, like Et, Kay, Lay or Vee, as it does in many words, you must write with the upward *rt* (Ret), rather than with the downward. It makes a better distinction by an angle, requires less care, and is more rapid.

W hook beginning is Em and En written by halving, only for the reason they would conflict with Mert (mr-d) and Nerd (nr-d). Do you remember the signs for Mer and Ner?

Second. The consonant first, as if it were a full length, then the vowel after it, then the *t* or *d*, as the case may be. If it has an initial *l* or *r* hook, read the consonant, then the hook, then the vowel, then *t* or *d*, and then the rest, if any.

Kay, after Ef, is not halved. It would look too much like simply Ef, and in rapid writing the joining could not be seen. Lay, also, for the same reason, does not permit a halved Kay after it.

Ted, the past tense of verbs, is often better written disjointed if inconvenient to join—that is, with the full-length first, and half-length disconnected, rather than half-length first and full-length after.

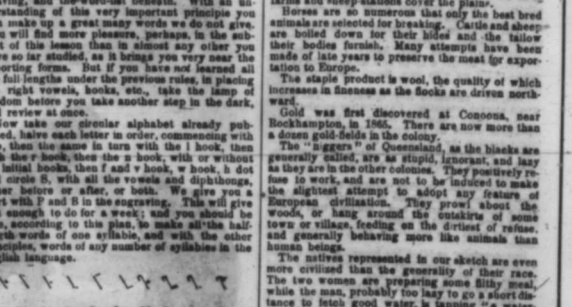
Ist you can write with halved Es. We write it ourselves in all words ending in *ist*, inside the *Shon* hook. The first to best for beginners.

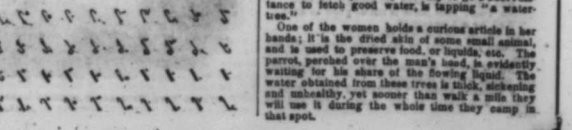
Exception: Half-lengths cannot be used—1. When a vowel follows the *t* or *d*. 2. When the *t* or *d* have two vowels before them. 3. When *d* is preceded by *l*, *r* or *n* following a vowel, as in *married*.

Ray, standing alone as the only consonant, cannot be written half-length.

We continue, in this lesson, to write all our examples on the line, with the required vowels. When you do not fully understand all we say in the body of the instruction refer to the exercises in the engraving, and the word-list beneath. With an understanding of this very important principle you can make up a great many words we do not give. You will find more pleasure, perhaps, in the subject of this lesson than in almost any other you have so far studied, as it brings you very near the reporting forms. But if you have not learned all the full-lengths under the previous rules, in placing the right vowels, hooks, etc., take the lamp of wisdom before you take another step in the dark, and review at once.

Now take our circular alphabet already published, halve each letter in order, commencing with Pee, then the same in turn with the *l* hook, then with the *r* hook, then the *n* hook, with or without the initial hooks, then *f* and *v* hook, *w* hook, *h* dot and circle S, with all the vowels and diphthongs, either before or after, or both. We give you a start with P and B in the engraving. This will give you enough to do for a week; and you should be able, according to this plan, to make all the half-length words of one syllable, and with the other principles, words of any number of syllables in the English language.





The foregoing signify, in rotation:

Paid or pate, pit, pet, pat or pad, put, put, prayed or prate, prade, Prat, pride.

Proud, plead or pleat, played, or plate, plead, plat or plaid, plot or plod, plight or pled, plowed, paint or pained, pawned.

Pinned, pent or penned, pant, paints, pents, pants, ponds, pinte, ponets, parred.

Puffed, beat, or bead, bait or (o)beyed, bought, boat, or (a)bode, boot, bid or bit, bet or bed, bat or bad, but or bud.

Bite or bide, about, breed, brayed, brought or broad, brute, bread, brat, bright or bride, brewed.

Blest, bleed, blade, blowed or bloat, bled, blot, blood, blight, boned, bond, bend or bent.

Band, binde, bounds, let, laid (made downward), met, made, net, need.

Write or right, ready, quiet, married, liked, effect.

(To be continued.)

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

AUSTRALIA.

QUEENSLAND.

THE coast of this prosperous colony is indented by numerous fine bays, with many large natural harbors, many of which form the outlets of navigable rivers. The principal of these are Moreton Bay, at the head of which stands Brisbane, the capital of the colony; Harvey Bay, Port Curtis, Keppel Bay, Port Bowen, Port Denison, Halifax, Rockingham, Trinity, Princess Charlotte, Weymouth, and Shelbourne Bay. The whole eastern coast is strewn with small islands.

From fifty to one hundred miles from the shore, and parallel to it, is a mountain chain, forming several distinct ranges, from which numerous spurs run to the sea.

The principal of these are the Gilbert Range, on the north, the Expedition Range, in the centre, and the Denham Range, in the south. The general height of these mountains is not more than 3,000 feet; but some of the peaks are much higher.

Beyond the mountains, table-lands covered with herbage and well supplied with water, but without trees, reach across the country to the Gulf of Carpentaria, broken occasionally by mountain ranges.

Within certain distances of the principal mountains the rains fall regularly, and the plains are covered with light timber, while the mountains themselves are heavily wooded.

The chief rivers of Queensland are the Fribane, the Arrowsmith, Logan, Pine, Caboulture, Mary, Burnett, Fitzroy, Dawson, MacKenzie, Isaacs, Burdekin, Bower, Belyando, Mitchell, Van Diemen's, Flinders, and Albert.

The banks of the rivers are generally high and well-wooded, being mostly covered with thick hedges of mangroves and forests of fig-trees festooned with vines.

On the mountains the pine and cedar, and many varieties of trees unknown elsewhere, grow luxuriantly.

Queensland boasts of the finest climate in Australia, some parts of it resembling closely that of Madeira, and is rapidly becoming a favorite resort for invalids. The Summer in the northern part of Queensland is very hot indeed, the thermometer sometimes indicating 100 deg. in the shade. The nights are cool and pleasant, at least to the "natives," as Europeans born in Australia are called, but to a person who has but lately arrived in the country the nights are a source of torment, for swarms of musquitoes attack him from all sides, and he rises in the morning apparently more fatigued than when he went to bed.

The beds are encircled by "gauze musquitonets," and before retiring to rest you must be very careful to chase the lively "quitos" from under the net, drop the folds suddenly, and then tuck yourself in. The nets are known to measure the few who may have escaped you at first, and who still remain on the inside of the fortification. You may then have a chance of sleeping peaceably.

Rain falls regularly in the hot season, but a dry period is expected every six or seven years.

The soil is remarkably well adapted for the cultivation of cotton, sugar-cane, tobacco, maize, wheat, and all the vegetables and flowers of Europe.

With the exception of apples, pears and cherries, Queensland furnishes every kind of fruit in the world. The orange, lemon, citron, pineapple, fig, banana, peach, nectarine, grape, guava and mulberry grow to perfection.

The downs furnish rich pasturage, and cattle-farms and sheep-stations cover the plains.

Horses are so numerous that only the best bred animals are selected for breaking. Cattle and sheep are boiled down for their hides and the tallow their bodies furnish. Many attempts have been made of late years to preserve the meat for exportation to Europe.

The staple product is wool, the quality of which increases in fineness as the flocks are driven northward.

Gold was first discovered at Canoona, near Rockhampton, in 1865. There are now more than a dozen gold-fields in the colony.

The "niggers" of Queensland, as the blacks are generally called, are as stupid, ignorant, and lazy as they are in the other colonies. They positively refuse to work, and are not to be induced to make the slightest attempt to adopt any feature of European civilization. They prowl about the bush enough to do for a week; and when should be able, according to this plan, to make all the half-length words of one syllable, and with the other principles, words of any number of syllables in the English language.

They scarcely ever congregate in a town or village, feeding on the dirtiest of refuse, and generally behaving more like animals than human beings.

The natives represented in our sketch are even more civilized than the generality of their race. The two women are preparing some filthy meal, while the man, probably too lazy to go a short distance to fetch good water, is tapping "a water-tree."

One of the women holds a curious article in her hands; it is the dried skin of some small animal, and is used to preserve food, or liquids, etc. The parrot, perched over the man's head, is evidently waiting for his share of the flowing liquid. The water obtained from these trees is thick, sickening and unhealthy, yet sooner than walk a mile they will use it during the whole time they camp in that spot.

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THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

To be Read by all who Send Answers.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF ANSWERS TO ALL THE ENIGMAS, ETC., IN THIS NUMBER.

For the best and earliest, due allowance being made for the distance of each competitor - $5.00
For the next best - - - - - - 2.50
For the third in merit and promptness - - 1.00

N. B.—There is no prize offered for an answer to only one puzzle or riddle. The answers must be to ALL. Competitors in all parts of the country have an equal chance.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 651.

1. Thrive; Heaven; Repine; Ivican; Venal-d; En-ends. 2. C, Mat, Moral, Caraway, Tawny, Lay, Y. 3. Inter-vie-wed. 4. Garden; Arouse; Roast-s; Duster; Estates; Near Ma. 5. Sam. 6. Assail-ant. 7. Last Will. 8. Astley, Rowell—Ardolf, SO, Throw, LIE, Evil, Yell. 9. Slink, Link, Ink, Kin. 10. Love, Hope, Fear, Rage, Hate, Anger, Awe, Fury, Pity, Joy.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 651.

1.—R. J. Butler, Westerly, R. I.
2.—A. S. Heany, 49 Sheriff Street, New York City.
3.—R. M. Eastman, Melrose, Mass.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—DELETIONS.

Delete a word that esculents doth mean,
A name for Roman magistrates is seen;
Delete a plant that you for food oft see,
And see what means bewilder or confuse;
If 4 may place you will next delete,
You'll a mixture find that animals eat;
A point delete—an animal is there
That is hunted for its flesh and hair;
Then last you'll find, if you'll delete a saint,
A pious woman mentioned in the Testament.

2.—CHARADE.

My second is part of my first;
My first is all of my second;
Unite me, and then you'll find,
Both healthful and useful I'm reckoned.

3.—DECAPITATION.

Attention, dear friend, if you kindly will lend
To me for not more than a minute,
You quickly will see what this riddle will be,
And all you'll find plain that's within it.

And now, riddler kind, please recall to your mind,
A word which means not expressed clearly,
Indefinite, too, and not telling to you
What purport is meant by it really.

Behead it now, please, then a kind of disease
Is left; and while it you are guessing,
I'll just say farewell, for I've no more to tell—
But hope the right names you're expressing.

4.—SQUARE WORDS.

I am before you;
Now I'm over you;
Now at either end.
To happen I send;
In music I'm penned.

5.—SQUARE WORDS.

A Persian governor; to come; a merchant; equestrians: di-inclined; a proper name.

6.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

With finals and centrals girls first could do well
Before Howe and Singer machines thought to sell.

A costly fabric more used in the past;
One of two articles sure to last;
To give way to this is surely a shame;
This is short for Timothy's name;
Abbreviation for a Pacific State;
Don't fall on to this or you'll scratch your pate.

7.—ANAGRAMS.

Make one word out of each of the following: 1. new door. 2. Him can us.

8.—CHARADE.

My first the staid old founder of a rich and prosperous State;
My next a type of industry we're referred to early, late;
My whole first's father as admiral floated great.

9.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

The last end of fruit; a domestic animal; an ancient measure; in form of table; one who lays ceramic flooring or roofing; a sticky substance; the beginning of right and the end of error.

10.—CHARADE.

By a large stone, with first o'ergrown,
A faded widow is lying;
Cool shadows pass athwart the grass,
The wind is softly sighing.

And now appears, to ease my fears
That whole will die neglected,
My second fair, who sees it there
With pleasure unaffected.

FUN FOR THE BOYS.

A NEW YORK belle besought her father for a new sealskin sack. "My dear," he responded, fondly, but seriously, "we paid over $6,500,000 to the British Government recently, and I can't afford it."

A NEVADA GIRL'S LOVE-LETTER.—"DEAR JIMMY: It's all up. We ain't going to get married. Ma says you're too rough, and I guess she's right. I'm so sorry—but can't you go to Europe and get fixed down?"

A LITTLE girl at school read thus: "The widow lived on a limbacy left by a relative." "What did you call that word?" asked the teacher; "the word is legacy, not limbacy." "But," said the little girl, "my sister says I must say limb, not leg."

"A MEMBER of the rhetorical class in a certain college had just finished his declamation when the professor said, "Mr. ——, do you suppose a general would address his soldiers in the manner you spoke that piece?" "Yes, sir, I do," was the reply, "if he was half scared to death."

"HERE," said a farmer in Syracuse as he exhibited a broken jar to the manufacturer, "I packed this jar full of butter, and the jar split from top to bottom. Perhaps you can explain the phenomenon." "Oh, yes, I can," was the ready reply; "the butter was stronger than the jar."

PENALTY OF PRIVILEGE.—A gentleman who frequented a circus noticed a boy among the audience who was sound asleep every time he happened to be in. Curious to know why the urchin should resort to such a place for somniferous purposes, our friend went up one evening and accosted him. "My little fellow, what do you go to sleep for?" "I can't keep awake," rejoined the boy; "it is a terrible bore to see them doing the same thing every night." "But why do you come?" "Oh, I can't help it—I must come; I have got a season ticket."

OLD GENT (who firmly believes in compulsory education) to Cowboy—"Oh, you go to school, do you? Now, I dare say, you can tell me who it was that was saved when the world was drowned, can't you?" *Cowboy*—"Yes, sir; but I forgit his name."

A FORGOTTEN PARAGRAPH.

One afternoon a boy about twelve years of age, says the Detroit *Free Press*, called at the post-office and desired to secure a letter which his mother had posted an hour before. He described the envelope and direction, but it had already been sent away in the bag. The lad seemed so anxious about the missive that the clerk finally asked him if it was a matter of life or death.

"That's exactly what it is," replied the boy, as he turned a shade paler; "you see, ma writ to her sister, and forgot to put down, 'P. S.—We are all well;' and so my aunt won't know but what half the family are dead and the other half are dying."

"I can write that on a postal-card and send it along after the letter," suggested the clerk.

"I guess you'd better," replied the boy, as he tendered a penny; "'cause as long as we ain't dead there's no use in worrying my aunt about it. Write just like ma does, if you can, and don't get S. P. instead of P. S."

WHEN the captain's Irish steward asked him if a thing could be said to be lost when you knew where it was, the captain replied, "Of course not." "Then," said Pat, "your honor's copper kettle is not lost, for I know it's at the bottom of the say!"

STARTING A BOY.

A lonesome-looking boy was hanging around a woodyard, when the owner of the yard, having both charity and philanthropy for boys with tears in their eyes, asked the boy why he didn't peddle apples or do something to earn a few shillings. The boy replied that he had no capital, and the woodyard man took out a nickel and said:

"Now, my boy, I'm going to start you in life. Take this nickel and go and make a purchase of something or other. I'll buy it of you for ten cents, no matter what it is. Come, now, let's see what sort of a business head you have on you?"

The boy took the nickel and went off, but in ten minutes was back with a gallon jug which he had purchased with the nickel.

"Well, you are a keener," replied the man. "I never saw one of those sold for less than fifteen cents to any one. I want such a jug, and here's its fair price. Go, boy, and lay out your fifteen cents in apples, and I'll buy half your stock."

The boy did not return. Perhaps he fell into a sewer somewhere; but you can't make the woodyard man believe so. When he lifted the jug from under the table, where the boy had carefully placed it, he found a hole in the bottom large enough to let in a black-and-tan terrier.

BASHFUL LOVER (to his sweetheart):—"Ahem, miss. I want to see your father. I've an important matter to propose to him." *Young Lady* (considerately)—"I am sorry papa is not at home; but couldn't you propose to me just as well?" He did, and with perfect success.

THE proprietor of a bone factory announces that persons leaving their bones with him can have them ground at short notice.

TOO SHARP.

NURSE—"Did you put that mud on the doorstep, Master Charles?"

Little Master Charles—"No, nurse."

Nurse (artfully)—"But I saw you from the window."

Charles (more artfully)—"That you didn't, for I looked up to all the windows before I did it."

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THE ENGINEER'S STORY.

A LITTLE LADY AT THE LEVER.

NOT many weeks since, on my way West, by kind permission of the engineer I rode beside him on the engine. Away to the south stretched the bleak Pennsylvania wilderness.

"There's a right-down romance, or tragedy, or whatever you may call it," said the engineer, "attached to this hill. And I was the least of a hero in it. As there was a woman in it, though, I must tell you that I'm a married man."

"All right. Go ahead with the story."

"One night, about four years ago, and just about this month," the engineer continued, "I was coming down this hill with (considering the season) a pretty heavy train. At Wilkesbarre over in the valley—which you'll soon see—a young lady had got aboard of my engine. She wanted a night ride and was put on by the superintendent. She was a perfect lady, and her mother was in one of the cars, back. To tell the honest truth (as I have often said to my wife), I never saw a more beautiful or game-looking girl. She was very small-sized, dressed in what my wife calls complete taste, and her figure was so good, and her hands so small, and her ways so frank and artless, that I almost wished she was my daughter. Her face, though, was what I can't give you an idea of. It was the most beautiful face I ever saw. It had," proceeded the engineer, warming, "all the intelligence of a woman's and the simplicity of a child's. And she was so sprightly and lovable altogether, and asked so many questions, that, although I had never had a woman on the engine but once before, I invited her over here, to my seat, and explained to her all about how a locomotive is run. I showed her how to manipulate the lever which admits more or less steam to the cylinders; how the reverse lever is worked; how the tests of water and steam are made. I showed her how to blow the whistle and ring the bell, and explained how the brakes were blown down, and how warnings were given on the approach to crowings. She took it all in, and," said the engineer, stretching his arm across the boiler, and clutching my sleeve, "it was the best lesson I ever gave. Right up around yonder about two miles from here, just as I was handling the reverse lever, we struck a stone or something on the track at nine o'clock at night. I was a-bending down at the time (the girl was sitting where you are, on my cushion), and quicker than lightning the lever flew back and struck me in the eye and knocked me—well, hang me if I know where. Anyway, it didn't make much difference for a minute or two, for I was just stunned. As we were on the down-grade, with no need of fuel, the fireman was back in the baggage-car, and when I came to, this young girl was holding on to my head and fanning me with her toy of a hat. It wasn't two seconds before I knew what was to pay. The engine and the whole train had started down this hill at the rate of sixty miles an hour. I tried to spring up and reach the lever. My right arm and side and right leg were numb. My face, and even my tongue were so paralyzed by the blow I had received, that I could scarcely speak. I was so desperate that (more to attract the girl's attention to the danger than for anything else) I grabbed her hat with my left hand and threw it outside of the locomotive, and then managed to beckon her ear down close to my lips, and say:

"'Trains going too fast. We're doomed if you don't turn the lever.'

"She understood me in an instant; and it was time. The engine was rocking, swaying, grinding and skurrying down the track like a beast with great bounds. Every second I expected it would leap the rails; it certainly was descending at the rate of seventy miles an hour. But that little thing sprang up here, clutched the lever, motioned which way she should shove or push it, got my nod, and reversed the wheels like a little man. Then she whistled down brakes—but there was no need of that, for the boys had put on every brake already. Inside of a mile and a half she stopped the train; and then she knelt down all trembling and crying—and now, what do you think she said?"

"I can't guess."

"Said she, 'Mr. ——, I feel as if I should faint. Havent you got some camphor, or—a little whisky? And as sure as you live she *did* faint right away there—right down in front of the fire-box—right on top of me.

"The fireman and conductor came in and took her back to her mother, and the fireman had to run the train down to White Haven."

THE KING AND QUEEN LOUISA OF PRUSSIA.

THE King was in the habit of breakfasting every morning with the Queen in her boudoir. On one occasion his Majesty remarked a pretty simple morning cap lying on his royal consort's work-table, and, taking it up, he asked, looking at the Queen:

"What may be the cost?"

Queen Louisa hesitated for a moment, and then said, merrily:

"What use is there in telling you? All men think every article of ladies dress too dear."

Frederick William was only the more stimulated in his inquiry, and the Queen in her bantering refusal, till at length the King prevailed, and she laughingly exclaimed:

"Well, if your curiosity must be satisfied, it cost four dollars."

"A monstrous deal of money for such a little thing," cried the monarch, with affected seriousness; and as it chanced that an invalided non-commissioned officer passed at the moment the open window of the boudoir, the King called him in, and, after receiving the old soldier's respectful salute, held up the cap, dangling between his fingers and thumb, before the eyes of the astonished veteran, asking, "And how much think you might this affair cost?"

"Begging your Majesty's pardon," begun the invalid, in a deprecatory tone, "the like of us does not understand such matters; but much it could not cost, it is so small—perhaps twopence."

"Groschens!" repeated the King in a tone of assumed displeasure: "you are quite out in your guess, friend! No less than four dollars has been given for it by this fair lady here; and as that is unquestionably a great extravagance, you can go up to her now and ask her to give you the same sum, since her purse is so lavishly filled."

The old soldier was thrown into the most puzzling predicament, and could not see clearly in how far he dare venture to enter into the jest (for such he felt it to be); but the Queen at once relieved him, for, putting on a gayly malicious smile, she went up to the hesitating sergeant, placed four silver dollars in his hand, and then said, pointing to the King:

"The poisonest lord standing there at the window has a purse much more lavishly filled than mine, for from him I receive all I possess. Go up, therefore, to him, and I am sure he will give you the double of what I have just handed to you; he is well able to do it."

The wary old soldier cast a sly glance of inquiry toward his royal master (who had assuredly anticipated the turn affairs had taken), before he would venture to advance, but, meeting a friendly smile, soon stood before the King, who, drawing his purse with a shrug, which seemed to say, "I have got into a fine mess with my jesting," handed eight dollars to the delighted graybeard, who instantly backed out of the royal presence with a precipitation which seemed to imply a fear that the dollars might perchance be redemanded, as given merely in jest. On his exit the Queen clapped her hands merrily, and exclaimed, with a joyous laugh:

"Who has paid dearest for the cap, I should like to know?" And, amid laughing reproach, the happy couple sat down to breakfast.

THE ENGINEER'S STORY.—A LITTLE LADY AT THE LEVER.—THRILLING EPISODE OF A NIGHT RIDE IN THE PENNSYLVANIA WILDERNESS.

A ZULU BRAVE.

SOME few years ago a Zulu hunter, hearing a young British officer speak somewhat lightly of native prowess, offered to give him a specimen of it by killing, single-handed, a huge lion which infested the neighborhood. The challenge was accepted, and the brave fellow set out upon his dangerous errand, the officer and several of his comrades following at a distance. Having drawn the beast from his lair, the hunter wounded him with a well-flung spear, and instantly fell flat on the ground beneath his huge shield of rhinoceros-hide, which covered his whole body like the lid of a dish. The lion, having vainly expended his fury upon it, at length drew back a few paces. Instantly the shield rose again, a second lance struck him, and his furious rush encountered only the impenetrable buckler. Foiled again, the lion crouched close beside his ambushed enemy, as if meditating a siege; but the wily savage raised the further end of the shield just enough to let him creep noiselessly away into the darkness, leaving his buckler unmoved. Arrived at a safe distance, he leveled his third spear at the broad, yellow flank of the royal beast with such unerring aim as to lay him dead on the spot, and then returned composedly to receive the apologies and congratulations of the wondering spectators.

THE DEVIL FISH.

ONE of the fishermen employed by Larco, at Santa Barbara, in drawing his net the other morning found entangled in its meshes a devil fish of large size. The ugly thing was entangled, and held on with such tenacity that it was brought into the boat only after tearing the net badly. The body of the monster is an elongated oval about fifteen inches wide and four feet long from the head to the end of the spear-shaped tail. The mouth, or rather beak, is exactly like the mandibles of a hawk, and is placed underneath the body. The long arms or feelers, of which there are eight, radiate from around this beak, and the largest of them are upward of seven feet in length, making eleven feet from the end of the two longest tentacles to the tip of the tail. The other arms are from four to five feet long. The under side of these feelers for about two feet from the tip is armed with rows of sharp-pointed hooks, increasing in size as they approach the end, where they terminate in veritable talons. The body is of a reddish-gray color on top, and a pale salmon pink underneath. The under side is covered with small suckers possessing considerable power of suction.

THE ORIGIN OF "SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."—A singular anecdote is related of Goldsmith's last journey to Edgeworth's Town, previously to his entrance at college. Having left home on horseback, he reached Ardagh, where it was necessary for him to sleep at nightfall. He had a guinea in his pocket, and was determined to enjoy himself. He asked for the best house in the place, and, from a piece of Irish literal comprehension, or waggery, was directed to a private house instead of an inn. Goldsmith had no thought of a mistake, and, being readily admitted by the servants—who, from his confidence, concluded that he was some well-known friend and invited guest of their master—he gave directions concerning his rooms; and, being shown into the parlor, found there the owner of the mansion at the fireside—a Mr. Featherstone, a gentleman of fortune, and somewhat of a wit. Oliver began to call about him with authority, as one entitled to attention; and his host, having soon detected the youth's error, and, being willing to enjoy an evening's amusement, humored his guest, caused wine and whatever else Oliver chose to order to be brought him; accepted, with his wife and daughters, an invitation to supper at his own table, and received with becoming attention strict injunctions to have a hot cake ready for breakfast on the following morning. It was not till he called for his bill that the abashed schoolboy discovered his blunder, and learned that he had been entertained at the residence of an old acquaintance of his father. The adventure was subsequently made to furnish the main incident in the comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer."

EVERY one has read of the tulip mania which flourished in Holland from 1634 to 1637. Immense prices were paid for single bulbs, and this statement is corroborated by the fact that two houses, about twenty miles from Amsterdam are offered for sale which were purchased with the proceeds of the sale of three tulip bulbs. The remarkable purchase is preserved in a stone inserted in the gable-end of one of the houses.